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FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

EASTERN AFFAIRS

PARTS 34 & 35

1934



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## FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

# EASTERN AFFAIRS

PART XXXIV

JANUARY TO JUNE 1934



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## CONFIDENTIAL.

## Further Correspondence respecting Eastern Affairs.

## PART XXXIV.

## CHAPTER I.—ARABIA.

[E 50/2/25]

No. 1.

*Sir E. Drummond to Sir John Simon.—(Received January 2, 1934.)*

(No. 1022.)

Sir,

*Rome, December 30, 1933.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 389 of to-day's date, I have the honour to transmit herewith translations of three *notes verbales*(<sup>1</sup>) from the Italian Government on the subject of the situation in South-West Arabia, together with a translation of a personal letter from Signor Suvich to myself which accompanied these notes.

2. It is evident from the tone of this last communication that the Italian Government attach real importance to the projected discussions in Rome; and for that reason, if for no other, I hope that it will be possible for a member of your Department to come out here as soon as is convenient. From the first two notes you will observe that the Italian Government are anxious to justify their own attitude in regard to Asir; and no doubt they still have hopes of influencing in some degree that of His Majesty's Government. In effect, however, they have agreed to conversations in full realisation of the latter's attitude; and they cannot complain if His Majesty's Government eventually fail to modify it. Their arguments, however, are moderately set forth, and will no doubt receive the examination which they merit.

3. I regret that the Italian Government should have thought it necessary to send the third *note verbale* at all; but it should be remembered that they have throughout maintained that (in their view) it is impossible for British policy to be conducted in watertight compartments.

4. I should perhaps add that the substance of Jedda telegram No. 223 of the 26th December and the gist of No. 226 of the 29th December were conveyed to the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs. As regards the latter telegram, it was merely stated that, according to the Saudi Government, agreement seemed to be in sight on all the major points (including Asir), with the exception of Nejran. Signor Guarnaschelli, to whom this information was given, expressed pleasure and relief at the progress made, which, he seemed to infer, implied that Ibn Saud had, in fact, consented to "negotiate" in regard to Asir. He added that he would try to obtain confirmation of the progress made from Sanaa.

I have, &amp;c.

ERIC DRUMMOND.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.



Enclosure 1 in No. 1.

*M. Suvich to Sir E. Drummond.*

(Translation.)

My dear Ambassador,

DURING the last few weeks we have had occasion to consider the situation in Arabia; the Ministry has been in contact on this subject with the Embassy, and your Excellency has forwarded certain notes regarding the various aspects of the situation itself.

I send you herewith the replies to these notes, which I have preferred to submit together, given the connexion between them, and after having given my own particular attention to the question, both in its present phase and in its preceding phases.

Besides the events which are now taking place in Arabia, the fundamental fact which underlies these notes is formed, as you know, by the conclusions of the Rome conversations of 1927, and represents one of the aspects of Anglo-Italian collaboration after the war, and one which is both interesting and fruitful, seeing that it has certainly contributed to the maintenance of peace between the States of the Arabian Peninsula.

It is hardly necessary that I should draw your attention to the contents of the attached notes, and that I should request you to be so good as to draw the attention of your Government to them.

I am also happy to inform you that I do so at the instance of his Excellency the head of the Government, with the request that you should be so good as to interest the Prime Minister, Mr. MacDonald, in the question.

At this moment, in which our two Governments are bound in the interests of peace to continue their common work for the best solution of the problems and questions which concern Europe, and one may say the whole world, the Italian Government desires to express the hope that such collaboration and understanding may also continue in regard to the problems of the Arabian Peninsula, a result which could not fail to have the most favourable influence on the pacification of this district, and, in general, a favourable repercussion on the whole work of Anglo-Italian collaboration.

Accept, &c.  
SUVICH.

Enclosure 2 in No. 1.

*Note Verbale from Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs.*

(Translation.)

THE Royal Ministry for Foreign Affairs has the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the *notes verbales* of the British Embassy Nos. 350 and 365 of the 20th and 26th October last, and of No. 372 of the 7th November, as well as the receipt of the aide-mémoire of the 30th October and the 17th November last, and with reference to their contents and (with reference) at the same time to the Ministry's preceding *notes verbales* on the question and, in particular, to No. 228396/118 of the 21st September last, have the honour to make the following communication:—

2. According to the British Embassy's *note verbale* No. 350 of the 20th October last, the British Government considers that its own position in regard to the sovereignty over Asir is determined by the fact that in 1931 it entered into relations with the Hejaz Government regarding communications between certain localities under British administration and the port of Jizan. In this regard note No. 350 of the British Embassy refers to a preceding *note verbale* No. 296 of the 24th July, 1931. The same British note No. 350 adds that such action on the part of the British Government constituted an informal admission of the rights of Ibn Saud over this province, though, in order to meet the point of view of the Italian Government, the British Government deferred any direct and formal manifestation of its recognition of the sovereignty of the Saudi King over Asir. It further asserts that the British Government holds, so far as it is concerned, that this sovereignty is valid *de facto* and *de jure*.

Since reference was made to the preceding exchange of notes in 1931, the Italian Government considers it opportune to resume as follows the contents of these notes:—

In its aide-mémoire of the 30th May, 1931, the British Embassy informed the Royal Ministry for Foreign Affairs that the London Government had received a note from the Hejaz Government in which the latter requested British acquiescence in what, according to the point of view of the latter, should be considered as the *de facto* and *de jure* status of Asir, and that in these circumstances the British Government had the intention of recognising the absorption of Asir on the part of the Hejaz, but that, before doing so, it desired to receive the observations of the Italian Government.

The Royal Ministry for Foreign Affairs' reply was a detailed *note verbale* of the 25th June, 1931, in which it referred to the discussion of the Asir question which took place during the Rome conversations of 1927, and concluded by expressing the hope that the British Government would find it convenient not to proceed with the demanded recognition in the interests of the maintenance of peace in the Arabian peninsula.

The British Embassy made it clear in its *note verbale* of the 24th July, 1931, that the communication of the Hejaz Government did not demand a formal expression of recognition of the incorporation of Asir in the dominions of Ibn Saud, but only the conclusion of agreements for laying down the methods of communication in certain localities under British administration and the ports of Jizan and Asir. It added that the British Government, in order to meet the views of the Italian Government, agreed to put off all formal and direct expression of recognition of the sovereignty of Ibn Saud over Asir, although it remained of opinion that Asir had become *de facto* and *de jure* an integral part of the Saudi provinces. The Royal Ministry for Foreign Affairs, in its *note verbale* of the 13th August, 1931, took note that no demand for formal recognition of the sovereignty of Ibn Saud over Asir had been put forward by the Hejaz Government to the London Government, and noted with pleasure that the British and Italian Governments were agreed in the determination to put off all formal and direct expression of recognition of the sovereignty of Ibn Saud over Asir.

The statement made in the British note No. 350 of the 20th October, that the London Government considers that the question of the sovereignty over Asir is determined by the fact that in 1931 they entered into correspondence with the Hejaz Government with regard to the method of communication between certain localities under British administration and the port of Jizan, and that such a fact constitutes an informal admission on the British side of the rights of Ibn Saud over Asir, represents a new statement which seems to go beyond the idea expressed in the British note of the 24th July, 1931. The establishment of such communications is a simple fact which, in the opinion of the Italian Government, does not in itself imply any admission, even informal, of the rights of Ibn Saud over Asir; still less would it seem to have as a consequence the determination of the position of the British Government in regard to the question of the sovereignty over Asir.

The Italian Government points out in this connexion that, as was mentioned in *note verbale* of the 25th June, 1931, the representatives of the British Government during the conversations at Rome declared that all territorial questions in regard to Asir, and in general in regard to the frontiers between the Hejaz and the Yemen, were regarded as an internal Arabian question which did not interest the British Government.

So far as it is concerned, the Royal Government considers the question of Asir as still open between the Hejaz-Nejd and the Yemen; and, basing itself on the spirit of the conclusions of the Rome conversations, holds that it should not in any case commit itself in regard to a dispute between the two Arab States.

Recalling in particular that the original cause of this dispute is the suppression carried out by Ibn Saud of the buffer State, the existence of which was considered necessary in the Rome conversations in order to avoid acute friction between the two Arab States, the Royal Government trusts that the British Government will uphold its own determination to avoid any formal and direct recognition of the sovereignty of Ibn Saud over Asir, and will also abstain generally from committing itself in regard to the dispute which separates the two States.



3. Having thus explained the point of view of the Italian Government in regard to Asir, it is now necessary to consider the action which has been or will be taken by the British and Italian Governments with a view to preventing an armed conflict between the two Arab States.

The Royal Government, for its part, has not failed to exercise all possible influence on the Imam with a view to avoid the outbreak of hostilities; it considers, so far as it is concerned, that it has attained its end, seeing that in spite of the continuous violations, from 1926 to the present time, on the part of Ibn Saud of the *de facto* and *de jure* status in Asir—a province over which the Imam claims and maintains his well-known rights—it has succeeded in avoiding, on the part of the Imam himself, a reaction greater than that which has taken place, and which has been limited to verbal protests and to categorical reaffirmations of the above-mentioned rights.

With regard to the analogous action to be exercised in regard to Ibn Saud, the Italian Government, with reference to what was said in the first part of paragraph 5 of note No. 350 of the British Embassy, is perfectly aware of the difference existing in the situation in which the British Government found itself in regard to the dispute between Ibn Saud and the Amir Abdullah. However, if the British Government is not in a position to exercise its influence on both parties, the possibility exists that such influence might be exercised in a parallel manner on Ibn Saud and on the Imam.

In effect and in the same way as the pressure exercised on the Imam by the Italian Government, the British Government has renewed its pressure on Ibn Saud, as is shown by *note verbale* No. 265 of the 26th October last, and by the *aide-mémoire* of the 30th October, and by the *note verbale* No. 372 of 7th November.

4. The Royal Government holds that parallel English and Italian action on the Imam and on Ibn Saud should continue to be exercised with a view to avoiding the further deterioration of the grave political situation existing to-day in the Arabian Peninsula, and the interruption of the direct relations which still exist between Ibn Saud and the Imam resulting in armed conflict between the two States.

5. The Royal Ministry for Foreign Affairs notes with interest what the British Embassy communicated in their *note verbale* No. 372 of the 7th November last regarding the attitude of Ibn Saud and his point of view in regard to the existing disputes with the Imam. From this communication it results that the principal objects of Ibn Saud are to assure—

- (a) The recall of the forces of the Imam from the *de facto* frontier existing before the outbreak of the present conflict (Ibn Saud evidently refers to the occupation on the part of the Imam of the territory of Nejran).
- (b) An agreed delimitation of this frontier.
- (c) The confirmation of preceding agreements.

While not wishing to discuss the merits of the Saudi point of view, the Royal Ministry for Foreign Affairs cannot refrain from observing that, while it does not appear that the occupation of the territory of Nejran by the Imam violated any existing rights of the Saudi Kingdom, no statement was made by Ibn Saud regarding the territory of Asir, which he evidently considers as an integral part of his kingdom, but which, in fact, constitutes the principal subject of dispute between Ibn Saud and the Imam. It is, indeed, a positive fact, in regard to which, in spite of the uncertainty of the available evidence (*"l'incertezza degli elementi disponibili"*) that it was Ibn Saud who changed the *de facto* and *de jure* situation existing in Asir by annexing it definitely to the Saudi Kingdom.

6. The Royal Ministry for Foreign Affairs is replying separately to the *note verbale* of the British Embassy No. 384 of the 20th November last.

Rome, December 1933 (XII).

Enclosure 3 in No. 1.

*Note verbale from the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs.*

(Translation.)

THE Royal Ministry for Foreign Affairs have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of *note verbale* No. 384 of the 20th November last, in which the British Embassy informed them that the London Government, appreciating the desire of the Italian Government to eliminate all possible points of friction between the two Governments and to co-operate in assuring the re-establishment of pacific relations in South-West Arabia, accepts the proposal of the Italian Government to hold a meeting of experts in Rome, but adds at the same time that it desires to know in advance more precisely the proposals and, if possible, the programme which the Italian Government has in mind. It adds that the London Government is, for its part, forced to state that it is not in a position to modify its attitude in regard to the sovereignty of Ibn Saud over Asir proper, that is to say, over that territory at least over which the Idrisi exercised his own sovereignty at the time of the Treaty of Mecca in 1926, and that it would be ready to elaborate the juridical reasons on which its attitude was based. It further asserts that there is no question of proposals intended to modify the conclusions of the conversations of Rome in 1927, which still, according to the point of view of the British Government, form the basis of the Anglo-Italian relations in Arabian and Red Sea questions.

The Royal Ministry for Foreign Affairs, while thanking the British Embassy for its courteous communication, has the honour to inform it that the Italian Government is grateful to the British Government for having promptly accepted the Italian proposals for a meeting of experts in Rome.

With regard to the request for explanations made by the British Embassy as to the proposals and the programme which the Royal Government have in mind to lay before the projected meeting, the Royal Ministry for Foreign Affairs has the honour to state that, as the Director-General of Political Affairs had already had occasion to communicate to the counsellor of the British Embassy on the 2nd November last, the meetings between the Italian and British experts should have for object the joint examination, on the basis of the conclusions of the conversations of Rome in 1927—which, in the opinion of the Royal Government, also constitute the basis of the Anglo-Italian relations in Arabian and Red Sea matters—and in the interests of the maintenance of peace in the Arabian peninsula and of friendly co-operation between the two Governments, of the events which have since taken place and the situation which has developed in those regions.

3. It is precisely because the Italian Government completely agrees with the British Government in holding that the conclusions of the conversations in Rome should constitute the basis of Anglo-Italian relations in all Arabian and Red Sea questions, and hence should be the starting-point of the projected meeting of experts, that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs cannot avoid being rather preoccupied in regard to the statement contained in the *note verbale* under reply, according to which the British Government could not abandon the attitude assumed by them in regard to the sovereignty of Ibn Saud over Asir.

4. It should, in fact, be remembered that, as the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has already had occasion to explain in detail to the British Embassy in its preceding *notes verbales* (see, for example, *note verbale* No. 222751/91 of the 25th June, 1931), the Treaty of Mecca of 1926, by which Ibn Saud set up his own protectorate over Asir, was the subject of discussion during the conversations at Rome in 1927; and in regard to it the British delegates, after having demanded and received instructions from the London Government, declared that the British Government could not have refused a Hejazi demand for the recognition of the Treaty of 1926, seeing that it was about to conclude with the Hejaz a Treaty of Friendship, and a refusal would have compromised the conclusion of this treaty (the treaty was afterwards concluded in 1927, although the British Government continued in its non-recognition of the situation created by Ibn Saud in Asir), but that, in any case, the British representatives, in the name of their Government, declared that all territorial questions, such as those of Asir, were regarded as an internal Arabian question and did not interest the London Government.



It is further noted that the record of the Rome conversations expressly consider Asir as the State existing in the Arabian Peninsula in regard to which the possibility was foreseen of taking the action contemplated in paragraph 2 of the conclusions themselves.

5. The statement mentioned in the note of the British Embassy No. 384 of the 20th November last, according to which the London Government desire to make it clear even before the opening of the proposed conversations between experts, that they are not in a position to depart from the attitude adopted by them regarding the sovereignty of Ibn Saud over Asir, deserves to be explained in relation to the assurances given in the course of the Rome conversations regarding British disinterestedness in territorial questions regarded as internal Arabian questions, if only to give rise in the proposed meeting of experts to a useful examination of the new situation created by Ibn Saud in Asir, which constitutes the principal modification of the political situation existing in the Arabian Peninsula at the time of the Rome conversations of 1927, and forms at present the principal reason for the existing tension between the Hejaz-Nejd and the Yemen.

6. The Royal Ministry for Foreign Affairs, while drawing the attention of the British Embassy to the above considerations, has the honour to confirm that it is ready for its part to begin the proposed conversations on the basis of the conclusions come to in 1927 in order to examine the events which have taken place since then, and the situation which has developed in Arabia (thus including the question of the action taken by Ibn Saud in regard to Asir) in the interests of peace in that region and of the friendly co-operation between the British and Italian Governments.

*Rome, December 23, 1933 (XII).*

[E 73/73/25]

No. 2.

*Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.—(Received January 3, 1934.)*

(No. 355.)

Sir,

*Jedda, December 9, 1933.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 285 of the 9th September regarding the Jedda water supply, I have the honour to report that the day of cheap and plentiful water for Jedda now seems as far off as ever.

2. Sheikh Muhammad Dehlavi and the Waziria Committee are still at work at Waziria extending the old Turkish conduit farther back into the foothills in order to increase the head of water, which seeps into it from the subsoil, and a satisfactory flow of water into the town continues. They have, however, done nothing towards the renewal of the conduit near the town; and it has now been established that the pipes in this portion, besides being rotten, are so full of the accumulated filth of ages that the water, which is reasonably pure at source, on arrival in the town contains almost every imaginable type of germ. Europeans here consequently eschew it, and even the native population, which is usually influenced by considerations of price a great deal more than by those of hygiene, fights shy.

3. It is estimated that an expenditure of £5,000 would suffice to repair the whole conduit, renewing the piping where necessary, and thus relieve Jedda of any future anxiety as regards water. The water runs from these wells to the town by gravity, and no pumping apparatus, not even the now derelict windmill pump introduced by Mr. Twitchell, is needed. An enterprising municipality would whole-heartedly support the scheme. But the Waziria Committee is lethargic. The all-powerful Minister of Finance is believed to be hostile to the scheme because its fruition would necessitate the closing down of the condensers which at present supply the town and would thus deprive him of one small but certain source of revenue. The local merchants on the committee are far too much in awe of him to act effectively. Whilst, therefore, the yield of certain municipal taxes has been voted for furthering the scheme and there is some talk of a future levy on pilgrims, no efforts are being made to raise an adequate

sum for the purpose, and the labours of the well-meaning Dehlavi seem doomed to be stifled through lack of funds.

4. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &c.

A. S. CALVERT.

[E 76/76/25]

No. 3.

*Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.—(Received January 3, 1934.)*

(No. 359. Confidential.)

Sir,

*Jedda, December 12, 1933.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 325 of the 31st October and to my telegram No. 216 of the 10th December, relative to the visit of M. Roger Maigret, French Chargé d'Affaires, to Ibn Saud at Riyadh, I have the honour to report that, as foreshadowed in my telegram under reference, my French colleague, who arrived back from leave on the 3rd December, left for Riyadh yesterday in a car provided by the Government in company with Haji Hamdi, the French-Algerian vice-consul and Fuad Bey Hamza. In my interview with the latter on the 10th December, he admitted that M. Maigret's visit would not be of a purely personal and private nature as I was informed on the 27th October by Sheikh Abdullah Suleyman. Conversations would take place on matters of no great importance, except to the countries concerned, viz., Syria and Saudi Arabia, and would relate to trade and commercial questions affecting the two countries. Fuad Bey remarked that he expected to be absent in Nejd for about two weeks, but that on his return he hoped to be in a position to give Sir Andrew Ryan more information in regard to the objects of this visit. He also observed that M. Maigret was "opening the door" of Nejd to other visitors.

2. I understand that M. Maigret's projected visit was known in Syria at the latest early in November, as the Indian vice-consul of this Legation, passing through Damascus about that time on his return from leave in Istanbul, found rumour very busy with the news. It was stated in some quarters that France was ready to lend countenance to Ibn Saud in his present political difficulties, and the wildest conjectures were current according to which Italy and France were the "backers" of the Imam and Ibn Saud respectively in the present dispute, Great Britain, for once, being omitted from the picture.

3. It would be of great interest to learn in due course from His Majesty's consular officers at Beirut and Damascus, to whom I am sending a copy of this despatch, whether any light, independent of the perhaps somewhat refracted information promised by Fuad Bey Hamza, can be thrown from Syria upon the inward reasons for this visit. Can there be among these matters of mutual commercial interest to the two countries the rather baffling problem of the market for thrones in Syria?

I have, &c.

A. S. CALVERT.

[E 77/77/25]

No. 4.

*Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.—(Received January 3, 1934.)*

(No. 360.)

Sir,

*Jedda, December 12, 1933.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 352 of the 5th instant, relative to the visit of an Egyptian commercial and financial mission, under the leadership of Talaat Pasha Narb, to this country, I have the honour to report that the members of the mission left by air for Yenbu on the morning of the 10th December, intending to journey by car thence to Medina and, returning the second day, to resume their flight to Egypt.

2. The programme followed whilst they were in this country conformed closely to that reported in my despatch under reference. Talaat Pasha Narb

[10923]



left Jeddah by car on the 6th December for Mecca, where he was entertained by Amir Feisal, Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman and Sheikh Abdullah-bin-Muhammad-el-Fadhl, and returned on the 8th, when he dined with Mr. and Mrs. Philby.

3. The results of the visit, in so far as they are known, or partially known, may be stated under the following heads:—

(a) *Banque Misr*.—I am informed by the manager of Messrs. Gellatly, Hankey and Co. (Sudan) (Limited), that his firm have been given, for the time being, the agency of the Banque Misr as regards its purely banking business. Mr. Warner expressed the opinion, however, that it would not be long before the Banque Misr established a branch of their own in this country.

(b) *Local Representation for Pilgrim Ships*.—It is understood that this has been given to the local firm of Messrs. Haji Abdullah Ali Ridha. It was stated on the 8th December that, although no written agreement had at the time been signed, yet Talaat Pasha Narb had definitely promised the representation of this shipping interest to the local firm. Mr. Warner, in this connexion, stated that his firm had been given the handling of the money of Egyptian pilgrims, probably *qua* agents of the Banque Misr.

(c) *Pilgrimage by Air from Egypt*.—It is believed that this question has received some consideration during the stay of the mission, though I am unaware of the result, if any. I have received the impression that the Saudi Arab Government have not proved very receptive to this idea.

(d) *Sale of Egyptian Products*.—I am not at present in possession of information on the activities of the mission in regard to the organisation of the sale of Egyptian products. The gratis distribution of such goods, to which I referred in my last despatch, was, I find, not confined to the poor alone, but was liberally used as commercial ground-bait in business circles as well.

4. I am sending copies of this despatch to the Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Department of Overseas Trade, and to His Majesty's High Commissioner in Cairo.

I have, &c.

A. S. CALVERT.

[E 79/79/25]

No. 5.

*Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.*—(Received January 3, 1934.)

(No. 362.)

Sir,

Jeddah, December 12, 1933.

SINCE my despatch No. 339 of the 27th November last, in which I had the honour to bring certain further information regarding the present state of tension between Saudi Arabia and the Yemen to your notice, the chief interest in the situation has centred in developments in the long-range negotiations, if such they may be termed, now proceeding between the two rulers. I do not propose to recount these in detail, as I venture to think they have been adequately reported to you by telegram, beyond briefly indicating the stage to which these exchanges have now come. According to Fuad Bey Hamza, there would now appear to be some prospect of a preliminary understanding over two of the Saudi four points, viz., the "minor" one (to quote Fuad Bey) of the disposal of the Idrisi; and Najran.

2. With regard to the former, it seems that Ibn Saud is willing to waive his demand for the Idrisi's extradition and, in return, the Imam has agreed to remove him from the danger-zone of the frontier to the interior of the Yemen. It is understood the retreat selected by the Idrisi is Zebid in the Tihama.

3. The position with regard to Najran is not so clear. Ibn Saud, Fuad Bey informed me, had emphasised to the Imam the tendency of the tribes in Najran to look more towards Nejd than to the Yemen of recent years, but, for the sake of a peaceful settlement, declared himself ready so far to "sacrifice his own interests" as to agree to the neutralisation of this territory as it was in former years. He was prepared to agree with the Imam that neither should send forces into Najran except for the maintenance of law and order, and then only after consultation and upon mutual agreement. This was the King's "last word" on this point. The Imam's reply consisted of a statement to the effect that the

presence of his own troops in this province was due solely to his desire to preserve security; and since then, Fuad Bey continued, the Saudi Arab Government had received information that the Imamic forces were withdrawing from Najran, having burned and razed to the ground the township of Badr, the religious centre of the Makrami sect, on evacuating it. Fuad Bey stated that the Yemeni troops were now being concentrated on the Asir frontier at Medi, Haradh, Saada and a fourth place, whose name was unknown to him, between Haradh and Saada.

4. So much for the present diplomatic phase. To judge from the statements of Fuad Bey Hamza, upon which the above account is based, the atmosphere in this dispute would now appear to be less highly charged. Militarily, the situation has undergone no material change. Reinforcements and supplies continue to flow south, but in a somewhat slower stream; and reports of road-making along the stony road to Abha from Mecca, to vary the story of warlike preparations, have also been received. The frontier was quiet, according to Fuad Bey, but there had been cases of individual desertions to the Imam of tribesmen in Asir, chiefly of the Abadil.

5. The general situation, therefore, has every appearance of having taken a turn for the better, but that this view is not shared by others in a position to form a considered opinion was illustrated by the report contained in my telegram No. 219 of the 12th that war with the Yemen was now imminent and that the King was proceeding to Asir to take command in person of the Saudi army there. The report reached me, through a trusted intermediary, from the person mentioned in your despatch No. 263 of the 5th October last; but, although this individual is normally well-informed, having, as you are aware, access to official circles, the story is so much at variance with the latest news gathered from Fuad Bey, that I feel constrained to await further confirmation. My informant is again in Mecca and so temporarily inaccessible, but should there be any truth in his surprising message, the news must very soon become public property. I am, at the moment, strongly sceptical.

6. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador in Rome, His Majesty's High Commissioners in Cairo and Jerusalem, His Majesty's Chief Commissioner in Aden and to the senior naval officer, Red Sea Sloops.

I have, &c.

A. S. CALVERT.

[E 50/2/25]

No. 6.

*Sir John Simon to Sir E. Drummond (Rome).*

(No. 39.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 15, 1934.

I HAVE reconsidered in the light of your Excellency's despatch No. 1022 of the 30th December, and the three *notes verbales* from the Italian Government, copies of which were enclosed therein, the proposal that His Majesty's Government should send an expert to Rome to discuss the position in South-West Arabia; and I have decided that, in the circumstances and for the reasons described below, it is no longer expedient to accede to this proposal. In spite of the message from Signor Mussolini, conveyed in Signor Suvich's letter to you, I have not felt justified in troubling the Prime Minister in the midst of his many and pressing preoccupations with this complicated question which is only of secondary importance.

2. In the first place, although, when provisionally agreeing in my telegram No. 375 of the 17th November to the Italian Government's proposal, I made it clear that His Majesty's Government were unable to change their previous attitude in regard to King Ibn Saud's sovereignty over Asir proper, two of the three recent notes from the Italian Government deal almost exclusively with that question. They apparently regard it as the crux of the whole matter, and, it must be assumed, as you point out in paragraph 2 of your despatch, that they still hope to influence the attitude of His Majesty's Government thereon in the course of the proposed discussions. It is, however, impossible for His Majesty's Government to modify their view that the area over which the Idrisi held sovereignty at the time of the conclusion of the Treaty of Mecca, passed, in virtue of that treaty, under the sovereignty of King Ibn Saud, and has formed *de jure* and *de facto* part of his dominions, at any rate since his arrangement of 1930 with the Idrisi.



3. Although it is undesirable to become involved in a detailed and complicated controversy with the Italian Government on this subject, it may be useful to you to have a full statement of the grounds which have led His Majesty's Government to this view. The position in international law appears to them to be as follows. Prior to the conclusion of the Treaty of Mecca of 1926 (the text of which is to be found in *Eastern Affairs*, Part XX, January to June 1927, No. 11), the Idrisi was an independent ruler exercising sovereignty over certain territories in South-West Arabia. By the Treaty of Mecca the Idrisi handed over to King Ibn Saud the entire control over his foreign relations, while retaining the government of the internal affairs of his country, apart from financial matters, which were also handed over to Ibn Saud. The result of the Treaty of Mecca was to establish a protectorate by Ibn Saud over the territories of the Idrisi as they existed at that date, and the Idrisi became unable, owing to the fact that he no longer possessed the control of foreign affairs, to alienate to any other Power any of his territories. As a result of the treaty of 1926, the Idrisi ceased to possess the status of an independent person under international law.

4. In 1930, as the result of negotiations which culminated in letters of the 10th October from the Idrisi and from his council to King Ibn Saud (see *Eastern Affairs*, Part XXVII, July to December 1930, No. 107), and as further defined in an arrangement contained in a report signed on the 16th November by representatives of King Ibn Saud and of the Idrisi (see the same print volume, No. 108), the Idrisi handed over to King Ibn Saud the internal government of his territory; and these arrangements were put into force by an order issued by King Ibn Saud on the 20th November, 1930 (see the same print volume, No. 108), under which the Idrisi territory was governed by a direct representative, appointed by King Ibn Saud under the title of Emir, assisted by an elected legislative council, the Idrisi merely retaining a nominal position of head of the Idrisi territory under Ibn Saud, with some powers of veto over the decisions of the Emir and the legislative council, subject to the final decision of King Ibn Saud. It appears to be perfectly clear that, as the result of the arrangements made in 1930, King Ibn Saud acquired full and complete sovereignty over the territories of the Idrisi, and that the form of government set up therein became merely part of the internal constitution of the territories of the Kingdom of the Hejaz and Wejd and its Dependencies, as it was then called.

5. The territories over which King Ibn Saud thus acquired sovereignty were the same territories as those over which he had acquired a protectorate under the Treaty of Mecca of 1926, namely, all the territories which were under the sovereignty of the Idrisi, at the moment of the conclusion of the Treaty of Mecca. This appeared to His Majesty's Government at the time—and still appears to them—to have been the position at that date. They considered further that King Ibn Saud's sovereignty over these territories was effective in international law and did not require any express or implied recognition by any other power to render it legally complete and effective.

6. It was on these grounds that His Majesty's Government (when the question was under discussion with the Italian Government in 1931 as a result of a request of the Hejaz-Nejd Government, which involved entering into correspondence with them on matters concerning Asir) decided that there could be no question of their declining to recognise the sovereignty of King Ibn Saud over Asir, but that, in deference to the wishes of the Italian Government, they could agree to refrain from sending to the Hejazi Government a formal communication of their recognition. The Italian Government appear to have misunderstood the purport of the Embassy's note, No. 296, of the 24th July, 1931, a copy of which was enclosed in Sir Ronald Graham's despatch No. 561 of the same date, and they appear to suggest in paragraph 5 of their note of the 23rd December last that the interpretation of the Embassy's note, which has now been given to them, involves some degree of conflict with statements made by the British representatives during the conversations held at Rome in 1927 regarding affairs in the Red Sea and South-Western Arabia. It was, indeed, precisely because there seemed some danger that the Italian Government might misunderstand the attitude which His Majesty's Government felt bound to adopt in 1931 in entering into correspondence with Ibn Saud's Government over Asir, and thus recognising by implication his sovereignty over that territory, that they felt it desirable to explain the position to the Italian Government beforehand. They can only regret that the Italian Government appear to have failed to understand the

attitude underlying the course proposed by His Majesty's Government in the Embassy's note No. 296 of the 24th July, 1931, when they replied in their note of the 13th August, 1931, concurring therein.

7. In paragraph 3 of the Italian Government's undated note of December 1933, they refer to the "well-known rights" of the Imam over Asir. His Majesty's Government know of no good grounds for any claim which the Imam may have put forward before the conclusion of the Treaty of Mecca to the area over which the Idrisi held sovereignty, and they therefore could not agree to any discussion with the Italian Government on the basis that the Imam had a reasonable claim to that area at the present time.

8. It will be seen from the preceding paragraphs that the attitude of His Majesty's Government, both regarding the legal status of Asir and also regarding the Imam's claims to that territory, is completely opposed to that of the Italian Government. This fundamental disagreement on two major questions is the first reason which leads me to consider it inexpedient to hold the proposed conversations.

9. In the second place, it appears from Sir Andrew Ryan's telegram No. 226 of the 29th December, which was repeated to you as my telegram No. 433 of the same date, that a measure of agreement in principle has now been reached between Ibn Saud and the Imam, and in particular that the Imam is prepared to recognise by treaty the existing position in Asir. If, as may legitimately be suspected, the chief motive of the Italian Government in refusing to recognise that position themselves is to maintain the Imam's unjustified claim to Asir in the hope of strengthening their own influence with him, it would be inappropriate and, indeed, paradoxical that at the moment when the Imam himself is prepared to recognise King Ibn Saud's position in Asir, the validity of that position should be discussed in the proposed conversations. Moreover, if the Italian Government were able to represent to the Imam that His Majesty's Government had agreed to discussion on this basis, the Imam would naturally form the impression that the status of Asir was still an open question, and would be encouraged to go back on the provisional agreement which he has apparently reached with King Ibn Saud and to revive his claims. The projected conversations would thus be likely actually to impede the prospect of a peaceful settlement in regard to Asir. They might also in the same way tend to make the Imam less ready than he might otherwise be to accept the apparently reasonable proposal which has now been put forward by King Ibn Saud for an agreement in regard to Nejran.

10. Thirdly, His Majesty's Government are anxious to maintain the relevant parts of the conclusions of the Rome conversations of 1927 as the basis of Anglo-Italian relations in matters concerning the Imam of the Yemen and Ibn Saud. They do not wish to run any risk of this basis being called in question, by discussing any modification of these conclusions at the present time, having regard more especially to the advantages presented by conclusions 2 and 3, in virtue of which the Italian Government are under an obligation to use their influence with the object of restraining the Imam from aggression against Ibn Saud and to refrain from intervention in any conflict between the two rulers. In the third enclosure in your despatch, the Italian Government speak of these conclusions as the starting point of the proposed conversations. This does not entirely exclude the possibility of their modification being discussed, and this consideration is, in my opinion, a further argument against embarking on the proposed discussions.

11. In sum, therefore, I see no advantage to be gained from agreeing to a meeting of experts in Rome to discuss the position in South-Western Arabia at a moment when, since King Ibn Saud and the Imam appear themselves to be moving in the direction of a desirable settlement, no discussion of the situation seems necessary; when His Majesty's Government are not in a position to discuss what the Italian Government erroneously profess to regard as the main issue, namely, Asir; and when His Majesty's Government desire to avoid any danger of the fundamental agreement between them and the Italian Government in regard to the Arabian coast of the Red Sea being disturbed. It seems that the proposed discussion would merely serve further to satisfy the Italian ambition to play the leading rôle among the Powers, without the justification on grounds of practical expediency which was present in the case of the Rome Conference, of my recent visit to Rome, and of the discussions there on the question of the Sudan-Libya boundary.



12. I accordingly request, in the light of the above considerations, that your Excellency will inform the Italian Government, in whatever manner you think least likely to provoke either an unfavourable impression or detailed and useless discussion, that His Majesty's Government consider that in the circumstances it would be unprofitable and possibly even prejudicial to the prospects of a direct settlement between King Ibn Saud and the Imam to hold the proposed conversations.

13. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Minister at Jedda.  
I am, &c.

JOHN SIMON.

[E 501/76/25]

No. 7.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received January 22, 1934.)*

(No. 371. Confidential.)

Sir,

*Jedda, December 30, 1933.*

IN my telegram No. 227 of to-day's date I have summed up briefly my conversations with my French colleague and Fuad Bey Hamza regarding the visit of the former, in the company of the latter, to Riyadh. It may interest you to have a fuller account of this episode.

2. As reported in Mr. Calvert's despatch No. 359 of the 12th December, M. Maigret and Fuad Bey started on the 11th December, two days before my own return to Jedda. They reached Riyadh on the morning of the 15th December and left again on the 18th December, getting back to Jedda and Mecca respectively on the 21st December.

3. M. Maigret lay very low, as his custom is, until the 27th December. On that day a telephone message from me asking whether he had returned elicited the offer of a visit. When he came, he first gave me some interesting general impressions. He contrasted Sana, a place where one merely got back to the Middle Ages, with Riyadh, which might be a Babylonian city of 5,000 or 6,000 years ago, all sun-dried bricks and silence, in a setting of illimitable desert.

4. I observed presently that M. Maigret's journey had been the subject of much comment. In order to draw him out, I cited, half-jestingly, the rumours that a Saudi prince was to sit on the Syrian throne, that negotiations regarding the Hejaz Railway were in progress, or that France was intervening in the quarrel between Ibn Saud and the Imam Yahya.

5. M. Maigret endorsed my own sceptical comments on rumours so fantastic and proceeded to tell me, with an air of great frankness, what he represented as the whole truth. He had a passion for visiting out-of-the-way places. He had a great sympathy for this country. He intended to write a book. His Government had authorised him to go to Riyadh, and he had gone there on the invitation of Ibn Saud. He had undoubtedly talked politics with the King, but only European politics. France had no political interest in Arabia, except in so far as her position in Syria raised certain questions, *e.g.*, in regard to tribes, and intensified her concern with Moslem affairs. His Government always impressed on him the necessity for a discreet avoidance of mixing up in Arabian politics. And so on and so on, for a pleasant hour or more.

6. It is quite true that M. Maigret, who hardly leaves his house while in Jedda, has a great taste for distant travel in the East. I had been prepared, for this reason and because I do not believe him to "cut much ice" with his own Government, to discount the importance of his trip to Riyadh. Nevertheless, his statement left one thing unexplained, namely, why the Saudi Government had authorised the visit. The ban on non-Moslem access to Riyadh has been slightly relaxed this year, witness the recent visit of Mr. Twitchell, but the reception there of any foreign diplomatic representative is a portent.

7. On the 28th December Fuad Bey came to see me for the first time since my return. Our first subject of conversation was M. Maigret's adventure. I trotted out the same three rumours, with much the same comments as before, and added a vague reference to suggestions that the French Government might be prepared to give some kind of material assistance to Ibn Saud. Fuad Bey expatiated on M. Maigret's love of travel, his desire to write a book and his great

friendliness towards this country and Islam. He dealt systematically with my collection of rumours. There was no present question, he said, of a Saudi candidature for the Syrian Throne. There could be no such question so long as the French were committed to a policy in Syria which turned on its having a republican constitution, and any modification of which would raise complicated questions, among them that of securing the assent of the League of Nations. If the Saudi Government reopened the question of the Hejaz Railway, as they had it in their minds to do, they would approach His Majesty's Government in the first instance. All that had happened so far was that his own replies to interviewers in Egypt had had a repercussion in Syria, where he had been asked many questions and been led to engage in very general conversations of an informal kind. He dismissed more briefly any idea of French intervention in the quarrel with the Imam.

8. Fuad Bey went on to say that there was, none the less, a business side to M. Maigret's journey. After obtaining my promise that what he was about to say would be regarded as highly confidential, he explained that when he was in Paris with the Amir Feisal in the spring of last year, certain questions had been broached. Conditions in Paris made it impossible to pursue them at that time. The French had tried later to communicate with him at The Hague and Berlin, but he was already in Moscow when they got into touch with him. Skipping a long interval, he said that eventually the French Government had charged M. Maigret to communicate their views on the desiderata put forward by the Saudi mission last year. They related to war material, a loan and a mission to help with military organisation and the Saudi air force. It had been decided to invite M. Maigret to convey the French reply to the King at Riyadh.

9. Fuad Bey was much less precise as to the messages which my French colleague had brought. His language generally, rather than any definite statement, implied that the negotiations were approaching a happy close. As I have stated in my telegram under reference, he mentioned financiers, and not the French Government, as the providers of the prospective loan, and he said that the mission, though recruited under the auspices of the French Government, would be of a civilian character.

10. Fuad Bey assured me more than once that these dealings with the French implied no departure from his Government's policy of friendship with His Majesty's Government. He reminded me lightly and amiably of their failure to obtain from British sources the help they needed. I said that we could not criticise the action of the Saudi Government in cultivating French friendship, and begged him to believe that my desire for information was inspired by interest and not by jealousy. I did not comment otherwise on his statement, except for a passing remark, when he mentioned the proposed military mission, that I thought the Saudi Government had been looking to Turkey about a year ago for this kind of assistance. Fuad Bey replied, with a slight and perhaps unintentional lapse from strict accuracy, that there had only been a question of sending young men to be trained in that country.

11. Assuming Fuad Bey's explanation to have been generally in accordance with the facts, and he was not only more precise but also more convincing than my French colleague, it remains to be seen what advantages the French Government expect in return for their benevolence. I have no means of obtaining information on this subject. My general view is that there will be little reason for perturbation, even if the negotiations do in fact produce concrete results. Despite my regard and admiration for Ibn Saud, I have still to discover that, in his dealings with European Powers or commercial interests, he ever gives much that is solid or of durable value for what he receives. I have never thought, for instance, that a Power providing an air force can hope for much of a "cinch" on the air of Saudi Arabia.

12. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's representative in Paris and His Majesty's consular officers at Beirut and Damascus.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.



*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received January 22.)*

(No. 1.)

Sir,

*Jedda, January 2, 1934.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 333 of the 14th December, I have the honour to state that, in my opinion, any claim by the Saudi Government to Hodeida on the ground that it was formerly Idrisi territory would be untenable, as untenable as the suggestion that the Idrisi could not validly cede rights further north to Ibn Saud, without the Imam's consent. When Fuad Bey spoke to Mr. Calvert of the possibility of a claim to Hodeida, he would appear to have been using it merely as a makeweight in his demonstration of the reasonableness of Ibn Saud. I am confirmed in this appreciation by a conversation which I myself had with Fuad Bey on the 29th December. I pointed out to him, among other things, that Hodeida was in fact in British occupation for over three months after the date assigned in the Saudi-Idrisi Treaty of 1926 to the earlier treaty between Ibn Saud and the Idrisi. The date of that treaty is given as the 10th Safar, 1339, or about the 22nd October, 1920. The British forces evacuated Hodeida, which the Idrisi thereupon occupied, at the end of January 1921. I cannot discover that the Idrisi had at any previous time held Hodeida, although he had been given possession of Loheya soon after the armistice with Turkey, according to the *Survey of International Affairs for 1925*, vol. I, p. 320. According to p. 322 of the same volume, he was compelled to evacuate Loheya early in 1925 and Hodeida on the 27th March of that year. So far as Hodeida is concerned, therefore, he would appear not to have been in possession either on the date of the Saudi-Idrisi Treaty of 1920 or on the date of the subsequent treaty of 1926.

2. I agree that it is very difficult to apply legal tests to the claims and counter-claims as to how the frontier between what is now Saudi Arabia and the Yemen should be drawn. Some rational conclusions may, however, be deducible from a study of the history of the Yemen and Asir since 1872, when the Turkish Government included both in the newly constituted Vilayet of the Yemen, although they separated them, to the best of my belief, between 1908 and 1911. I gave certain reasons for the latter belief in a memorandum which I wrote in London before returning from leave, but of which I have no copy. Such enquiries as I have been able to make since tend to confirm it. I have before me a calendar in Turkish for the Turkish financial year 1327 (the 14th March, 1911, to the 13th March, 1912), which, though unofficial, shows clearly that, at that time, there were only two outlying sanjaks of the Yemen Vilayet, viz., Hodeida and Taiz, and that Asir was already an "independent" sanjak, i.e., one directly under Constantinople, though not administered by a Vali.

3. I am at present engaged in an attempt to put together in outline an historical study of the kind indicated in the preceding paragraph. If Ibn Saud and the Imam come to a real settlement in the near future it may not be worth while to pursue this rather difficult task. Should I complete it, I will venture to submit the results for verification and correction by experts. For the moment I content myself with drawing your attention to the fact that the handbooks drawn up by the Arab Bureau and the Admiralty in 1916-17 describe the Wadi Ain, which falls into the sea at parallel 16°, as the then limit of Idrisi expansion. In my opinion, any subsequent extension of the Idrisi's authority further to the south must be regarded as having been in the nature of a purely temporary occupation. I think it will be found, though I am not in possession of the whole correspondence, that even when His Majesty's Government allowed the Idrisi to occupy first Loheya and then Hodeida, they were unwilling to commit themselves to the position that these places were being assigned to him permanently. Having regard to all that has happened since, I should say that the reasonable lie of a frontier towards the sea would be somewhere from the Wadi Tashar to the Wadi Ain.

4. While the foregoing observations may appear to be at once meagre and discursive, I think they provide the best approach to the specific matters, on which you have been good enough to consult me. Before dealing with them, I have to record one point which emerged from my conversation with Fuad Bey on the 29th December. When I mentioned the Wadi Tashar as being the terminal on the sea of the frontier, as described by the Saudi Government themselves last year

(see my despatch No. 113 of the 14th April, 1933), Fuad Bey said that the actual frontier abutted on the sea a little further south, i.e., at a place called Muwassim, 8 kilom. north of Medi, and that that place was occupied by Saudi forces. This may account for the recent recrudescence of rumours, which, however, I still believe to be confounded, of clashes between Saudi and Yemeni forces in the immediate neighbourhood of Medi. Be this as it may, Fuad Bey's statement is important as a matter of precision, although it does not affect the main argument of the present despatch.

5. Although the Saudi-Idrisi Treaty of 1920 has not been published, I think it can safely be assumed that it had no bearing on the frontier between the territory remaining to the Idrisi and the Yemen. It is conceivable that Ibn Saud may have promised the Idrisi support in resisting encroachment by the Imam, but the only frontier that could have been definitely determined between the parties was an inland one, as the Idrisi was then treating as an independent ruler, with the Yemen to the south of him and the Hejaz to the north. It indeed seems probable that Ibn Saud and the Idrisi did not define the whole even of the inland frontier between them. In Mr. Mayers' despatch to the Foreign Office, No. 6 of the 19th January, 1927, Dr. Abdullah Damluji is described as having said that the treaty of 1920 "only defined the north-south frontier in the Muhail-Abha region . . . and did not attempt to make a partition between Asir and the territory of the Imam Yahya." I derived the same impression from my conversation with Fuad Bey Hamza on the 29th December, and it is strengthened by a consideration of the situation at the time. Any agreement between the Idrisi and Ibn Saud, recognising the latter as ruler of portions of inland Asir bordering on the Yemen, might have precipitated a question between Ibn Saud and the Imam; but in 1920 Ibn Saud was pursuing another objective which made it specially important for him to disinterest the Idrisi in the Abha region. This was the absorption into his dominions of that region, in which the head of the former ruling family, the Beni Aidh, had made himself independent after the Turkish evacuation at the end of 1918. Ibn Saud achieved this immediate object in 1922.

6. It appears to me fairly certain that Ibn Saud did not become seriously interested in the frontier between what is now Asir Tihama and the Yemen until the time of the second treaty, which he made with the Idrisi in 1926. As he was then acquiring definite rights over what had been the Idrisi's territory, and as the Idrisi had been hard pressed by the Imam, it became important for Ibn Saud to make sure that he was getting all the territory to which the Idrisi could give a title. I agree that the transfer might be held to include territory from which the Idrisi had been wrongfully ejected by the Imam, but for the reasons given in paragraph 3 above, I do not think that places like Hodeida, or even Loheya, could be regarded then or now as having at any time been a part of the Idrisi's dominions. In my view, what the Imam did in regard to those places in 1925 was not to dispossess the Idrisi of what had lawfully been his, but to recover what the Idrisi had recently and impermanently occupied. All historical considerations seem to show that both Hodeida and Loheya form part of the Yemen proper as distinct from Asir.

7. Before dealing with the one remaining question, I may mention the one possible counter-argument which has occurred to me. It might be suggested that no new rights accrued in a legal sense in any of the territories concerned until the coming into force of the Treaty of Lausanne between Turkey and the Allies, and that each ruler's rights should depend on what he actually held at that moment. This argument might be used in support of an Idrisi claim and a consequential Saudi claim to Hodeida and Loheya, which places the Idrisi had in his possession at that moment, but I do not think it could be seriously sustained. The point had come into my head before my conversation of the 29th December with Fuad Bey, and I was interested to hear him throw out a reference to the Treaty of Lausanne as having determined the ultimate legal situation, but it was quite casual and theoretical. I pass to the more material question of the alleged agreement of 1931 between Ibn Saud and the Imam.

8. I can add little or nothing to what you already know regarding what passed in 1931, but it may be useful to give some account of the setting. We know that Ibn Saud claims to have come to an agreement with the Imam about the frontier inland at the end of 1927. The most precise account of this is given in Mr. Zada's letter to Mr. Rendel of the 28th July last. Mr. Zada there states



that on the 7th Rajab, 1346 (about the 31st December, 1927), the Saudi mission then in Sana made a proposal to the Imam's representatives, and that two days later the latter accepted it, "except where it related to the Idrisi territory." Even assuming the Saudi account of this affair to be correct, it is obvious that an exception in regard to Idrisi territory might be interpreted in various ways. The Idrisi had ruled mountainous regions in inland Asir at the height of his power. Muhammad-bin-Dhulaim, who actually figured in the 1927-28 negotiations as one of Ibn Saud's representatives, had previously been the Idrisi's Governor in the country of the settled Qahtan (see *Admiralty Handbook of Arabia*, vol. I, p. 441). It is therefore evident that the words "Idrisi territory" might have very different meanings for Ibn Saud and for the Imam. Anyhow, the situation ran on until the autumn of 1931, when the Imam occupied Jebel Arwa, and precipitated some sort of a fresh frontier settlement. All we know about this is that in December 1931 Ibn Saud renounced any claim to Jebel Arwa, and that his delegates signed what he regards as a treaty of friendship, &c. This treaty, which, if ratified, was ratified in a very singular fashion, contains no reference to frontiers, and nothing has ever been published on this subject, except the announcement of the relinquishment of Jebel Arwa by Ibn Saud. It may, I think, be said that there is a *de facto* frontier running inland from Muwassim to the north of Jebel Arwa and of Sada, but except as regards these two points, the first of which Ibn Saud ceded in 1931, and the second of which he admits to be in the Yemen, I think it would be unsafe, in the present state of our knowledge, to speak of either an understanding or a working agreement between the two rulers. Fuad Bey might well feel free to suggest that nothing was agreed to in 1931 which would affect Ibn Saud's right to Hodeida. But, as I have indicated above, I do not think the suggestion is meant to be taken seriously. It would, in my opinion, become important only if Ibn Saud were negotiating with the Imam after a successful war.

9. The historical review foreshadowed in paragraph 3 above will, if completed, deal to some extent with Nejran. That subject is not relevant to the present despatch, but I may say for the sake of completeness that I doubt whether, since the latter part of the eighteenth century, any of the rulers mentioned in this despatch, whether Turks, Imam, Idrisi or Ibn Saud have ever established a position in the region of the Wadis Nejran and Habuna sufficiently dominant and durable to serve as the basis of a solid claim to sovereignty. This view seems to underlie Ibn Saud's suggestion that it should be regarded as a sort of buffer or neutral territory between Saudi Arabia and the Yemen, a solution which, in my opinion, has much to commend it.

10. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

[E 712/2/25]

No. 9.

*Sir E. Drummond to Sir John Simon.—(Received January 30.)*

(No. 84.)

Sir,

Rome, January 26, 1934.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I received on the 23rd January your telegram No. 30, instructing me to inform the Italian Government unofficially of the communication which Sir Andrew Ryan had been authorised to address to Fuad Bey Hamza concerning the threatened outbreak of hostilities in South-West Arabia. Since I had not yet taken action on your despatch No. 39 of the 15th January, instructing me to inform the Italian Government, in terms which were left to my discretion, that His Majesty's Government were no longer prepared to enter into conversations in Rome regarding the Arabian situation, it occurred to me that the two communications might suitably be combined in a private letter to Signor Suvich, who, as you will remember, wrote to me personally on the 29th December, enclosing three *notes verbales* from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

2. I accordingly addressed to his Excellency on the 24th January the personal letter of which I now enclose a copy. You will observe that I have made

use of the discretion given me with the object, in the terms of your despatch under reference, of avoiding the creation of an unfavourable impression or detailed and useless discussion. In these circumstances, I trust you will not demur to my having inserted a paragraph about the pressure of work in your Department, more especially since the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs have been informed verbally on more than one occasion of the difficulty with which an expert could be spared and the considerable notice which would, in any case, have to be given before he was able to arrive in Rome.

3. As I pointed out in my telegram No. 22 of the 19th January, the Italian Government are likely to be a little sore at the refusal of His Majesty's Government to take part in the proposed conversations. It is fortunate, therefore, that I was able to gild the pill of refusal by the announcement of an intervention by Sir Andrew Ryan in terms which I think the Italian Government will most certainly appreciate.

I have, &c.

ERIC DRUMMOND.

Enclosure in No. 9.

*Sir E. Drummond to M. Suvich.*

January 24, 1934.

My dear Minister,

IN view of the interest which I know you take personally in the situation in South-West Arabia, I write to let you know that, according to our information, the prospects of a peaceful settlement between Ibn Saud and the Imam, which up to a week or so ago appeared to be rather bright, have again become clouded, and that, in the opinion of our representative at Jedda, there is, unfortunately, now a very considerable danger of war breaking out. In view of this fact, and especially since the situation seems to have become obscured by simple misunderstandings on both sides when they were within sight of a reasonable settlement, our Minister to the Saudi Government was instructed yesterday to address a personal letter to Fuad Bey Hamza, of which the following is a summary:—

On the 13th January His Majesty's Government learned that the Resident at Aden had again urged on the Imam the desirability of a friendly settlement, and had been told, in reply, that negotiations were still progressing between the two countries. This seemed to correspond with information which had been supplied to our Minister by the Saudi Government themselves, even though agreement over the Najran still presented difficulties. In these circumstances, His Majesty's Government, whose only object is to promote peace and stability in Arabia, are perturbed to learn that, before the arrival of a telegram despatched by the Imam on the 9th January, the heir apparent had been ordered to the front as a consequence of some local disturbance and that the Commander-in-chief in Asir had been instructed to advance. Although the advance of the latter appears to have been now countermanded, it seems that, as a result of some misunderstanding on each side as to the intentions of the other, there is a serious danger of an outbreak of hostilities. His Majesty's Government accordingly express the earnest hope that the Saudi Government, who have given so many proofs of their desire for peace, will do their utmost to avert the irreparable misfortune of war.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs was to be asked to convey this message to the King, with an assurance that it was inspired by the friendliest motives, and that His Majesty's Government were ready to continue to use their good offices to promote an amicable settlement if the negotiations were continued.

I feel that the Italian Government will appreciate the motives which have inspired this communication, and that, for their part, they will continue to use all their influence with the Imam to arrive at a reasonable settlement with Ibn Saud.

In the circumstances explained above, and for certain other reasons which I shall proceed to describe, His Majesty's Government have come to the conclusion that it would not be desirable to proceed, for the present, with the proposed conversations referred to in the Ministry's *note verbale* of the 23rd December last, enclosed in your letter to me of the 29th December. One of the principal grounds for arriving at this decision has been the fact that, as emphasised in the



Ministry's *note verbale* of the 23rd December, as well as in previous correspondence on the subject, the points of view of the Italian and British Governments in regard to (a) the status of Asir, and (b) the Imam's claim to that territory, are obviously very far from reconciliation. My Government would, of course, be quite prepared still further to elaborate their own ideas on the subject if the Italian Government so desire, but for the moment the question seems to be to a certain extent academic.

Moreover, while the actual position in South-West Arabia is still admittedly obscure, it is certain that up to a short time ago great efforts were clearly being made on both sides to arrive at an agreed settlement without recourse to war. In these circumstances it seems possible that the proposed conversations might be misunderstood locally and give rise to rumours which would impede, rather than facilitate, the peaceful solution of the dispute.

In any case, my Government would find it difficult at this moment to send out a suitable expert from London, as the competent Department of the Foreign Office is extremely hard pressed.

I hope that your Excellency will appreciate the force of the considerations which I have set forth above. Our two Governments may, and very likely will, continue to differ in regard to the specific problem of Asir; but I am convinced that we shall continue to collaborate in regard to the larger question of the prevention of war, and I have some hope that the last *démarche* of our Minister, coupled with any representations which the Italian Government may, for their part, see fit to take with the Imam, may result in a successful solution of our difficulties.

ERIC DRUMMOND.

[E 714/714/25]

No. 10.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received January 30.)*

(No. 2.)

HIS Majesty's Minister at Jedda presents his compliments to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit a confidential report on the heads of foreign missions at Jedda.

*Jedda, January 5, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 10.

*Report on Heads of Foreign Missions at Jedda.*

(Paragraphs marked with an asterisk are reproduced from the report submitted in January 1933.)

*Afghanistan.*

SALAHUDDIN KHAN SALJUQI, the Afghan consul in Bombay, arrived in Jedda on the 16th March, 1933, and obtained a Saudi exequatur as consul here with effect from the 11th April. It was understood to be the intention of the Afghan Government, when making this first appointment to Jedda, to do no more for the time being than to detach Salahuddin Khan for service in the Hejaz during the pilgrimage season. He stayed at the local hotel and took an unexpectedly early departure on the 25th April, leaving a clerk in charge of current business. I had no opportunity of cultivating his acquaintance after his first visit, when he struck me as a well-educated man, with a special inclination for philosophy. He spoke English passably and was understood to have a good knowledge of classical Arabic. His age is probably about 45. I gathered that before being sent to Bombay, in or about 1931, he had been little outside his own country, where he had been educated and had held a succession of official posts, including that of secretary to King Amanullah.

*Egypt.*

\*Hafiz Amer Bey has been Egyptian consul since March 1931, but was absent from Jedda from September 1931 until June 1932, and again from early

November 1932 until the end of the year. He lacks previous diplomatic or consular experience, having been formerly an advocate at Tintah, his home town, and having later held minor judicial posts in Egypt. He is said to owe his position to the protection of Emin Yehia Pasha, brother of the Egyptian Minister for Foreign Affairs.<sup>(1)</sup> He speaks English imperfectly and French very sketchily. Up to August 1932 he was by way of being very frank and friendly with the British Legation, and indulged at every turn in fulsome compliments, especially in intercourse with my wife and lady visitors. His frankness was chiefly shown in a rather tactless inquisitiveness, and I have had reason to doubt the sincerity of his friendliness. He is an ardent Moslem, strict in observance. Soon after he came here he formed a very poor opinion of the Wahhabi régime, and does not conceal his dislike of it. He is repaid by suspicion, which, in June 1932, was pushed to the length of a definite accusation of complicity in the plots behind the then rebellion in the Northern Hejaz. There is no evidence, as far as I am aware, in support of this accusation. Nevertheless, Hafiz Bey's sympathies are certainly with the enemies of Ibn Saud. He is hardly the man for the difficult task of promoting a rapprochement between Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

Hafiz Bey spent more time in Jedda in 1933 than he had done in the two preceding years, but was little in evidence at the British Legation and is seldom met in other European circles. He is, perhaps, more restrained in his sentiments than he was. When we do meet he evinces great anxiety to please. His wife and family have never come to Jedda.

*France.*

\*M. Roger Maigret holds the position of permanent Chargé d'Affaires, but the French Government have shown unwillingness to make his post more than a consulate, despite the conclusion of a general treaty with Ibn Saud in November 1931. He is a man of perhaps 60, and has had a long career in the French Near East service. He was employed in Morocco for many years prior to 1921, and appears to have had only a moderate reputation there. He was subsequently consul-general in Iraq. He is intelligent and witty, has a considerable knowledge of Arab countries, and boasts in his lighter moments of an equal knowledge of the Parisian underworld, as a result of having cultivated *apaches* in his conscript days. When I first knew him he was always very ready to talk about Morocco, which we both knew, but was more reticent about affairs nearer to us, notwithstanding professions of friendship which were sometimes almost "smarmy." I found him rather more communicative in 1932, but we met rarely during my short stays here, as M. Maigret seldom leaves his house, except to leave Jedda, and eschews social intercourse almost completely. His health is poor and he was much taken up with an aged mother until her death in August 1932. He does not appear to carry much weight with Saudi officials, whom he found inconceivably tiresome when negotiating his treaty. He is understood to have a considerable book knowledge of English, and has translated Mr. Philby's *Arabia* into French.

M. Maigret continues to go abroad very little in Jedda, but excited a good deal of interest in December 1933 by visiting Riyadh ostensibly to gratify his passion for distant travel and to obtain material for a book. He is known to have had other objects, but himself kept up the pretence throughout a very friendly and apparently frank conversation with me on his return.

He is a permanent grass-widower, but is understood to console himself with the society of a permanent lady guest, who occasionally makes discreet appearances elsewhere, e.g., at a fancy-dress ball in an English house on New Year's Eve, which M. Maigret himself attended (in ordinary attire) to the surprise of all.

*Germany.*

The German consulate is to all intents and purposes vacant. The titular incumbent, M. Heinrich de Haas, an account of whom was given in previous reports, left Jedda early in the year and has not returned.

<sup>(1)</sup> The Minister for Foreign Affairs mentioned above, Abdul Fatah Pasha Yehia, is now Prime Minister of Egypt but there is reason to believe that Hafiz Bey's *attachés* are with the Palace, rather than with any particular Egyptian Government.



*Iraq.*

The post of Chargé d'Affaires continues to be vacant. The Iraq Government were well served during the greater part of the year by Nasir Bey Al Gaylani, a subordinate officer. He left in July and was replaced in October by M. Hamdi-el-Chokhidar, a young man of similar status, but, I should say on a short experience, inferior calibre. He comes of a Shia family of cloth merchants, who enjoy some standing in Bagdad. He served for some years up to 1924 as an interpreter to the British forces in Iraq and was later employed in a similar capacity in the Iraqi postal administration. He passed into the foreign service in 1927 and was sent as *chancelier* to Angora, where he gained a certain amount of notoriety by quarrelling with a Christian colleague. Both were recalled to Bagdad, and, having been acquitted by a disciplinary board after their places had been filled, succeeded in an action against the Government for arrears of salary. M. Hamdi was appointed vice-consul at Kermanshah in 1930, and holds the same rank in Jedda. He is now about 30. "In person, he is," to quote Mr. Calvert, "short, of heavy build and of pugilistic appearance." He is very anxious to stand well with the British Legation, and, though unattractive, seems genuinely friendly. He speaks Turkish and passable English. He is unmarried.

*Italy.*

The Commendatore Ottavio de Peppo, of whom an account was given in last year's report, left Jedda in June. While absent, he secured a much-desired transfer from the post of Minister here to some employment in the Italian service connected with the League of Nations, which he owes probably to his friendship with Baron Aloisi. A M. Persico, who has been appointed to replace him, but at present only as Chargé, has not yet arrived. The fort is held by M. Ilio Dino Tonci, who belongs to the interpreter service but has large ideas. M. Tonci, with whom my wife and I had most friendly relations in Morocco, is a very ebullient person of strong Fascist convictions, but he is a good colleague and, when in form, a lively addition to any dinner party. His age is probably about 40. He speaks French well and can stumble along in English. He has appeared little in society since he was joined recently by his wife, a lady who is almost invisible, except when cars pass in the desert. No further account need be given of M. Tonci, as he also longs to leave Jedda, and will probably achieve his heart's desire early in 1934.

*Netherlands.*

\*M. C. Adriaanse, who succeeded M. van der Meulen as Chargé d'Affaires in 1931, is, like him, a member of the Dutch East Indian civil service. He is large, loose-limbed and a good fellow. He does not speak English as well as his predecessor, but has quite an adequate command of it. He has made a serious study of classical Arabic at the feet of Professor Snouck Hurgronje, and acted as general secretary to the Orientalists' Conference at Leiden. He can get on in the spoken language. Although far from brilliant, he makes a very good colleague and maintains the traditional good relations between the British and Dutch missions in Jedda.

\*M. Adriaanse has a wife and family in Holland, but has lived a consistently bachelor life in this country.

*Persia.*

Habibullah Khan Hoveyda, who had been Persian representative for some years, left Jedda to his infinite joy in December 1933, leaving the Legation in charge of his vice-consul, M. Behjat Rouhi, a quiet and inoffensive young man, who lives a retired life with his wife, a sister of Habibullah Khan. The new representative, Mohamed Ali Khan Mogaddam, is to arrive on the 8th January. Little is known of him here, except that he has been employed for some time past at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Tehran.

*Soviet Russia.*

\*M. Nezir (or Nezir Bey) Turakoulov is the doyen of the Diplomatic Body. He is a round-headed Moslem from Turkestan and has distinctly Tartar features. His age is 38. He seems intelligent and has a considerable aptitude for languages, having acquired a good working knowledge of Arabic, greatly

improved his French and started on English since he came to Jedda about three years ago. We converse a good deal in Turkish, the language in which he is most at his ease.

We are quite good friends but meet comparatively rarely, as M. Turakoulov goes little into European society. In the summer of 1932 he appeared to avoid me on purpose, possibly owing to the complications of the then situation. When we do see each other, we never approach any kind of political subject, but exchange *politesses* and simple stories. In this sort of talk M. Turakoulov displays a lively sense of humour. I think that he is genuinely more interested in commercial and economic subjects than in politics, and is content to devote himself to the uphill task of marketing Russian goods (he did an important deal in petroleum products in 1931, but is still whistling for the money), and securing the removal of the restrictions still imposed by the Saudi Government, in principle at least, on direct trade with Russia. He presents no appearance of wishing to make a splash, but after my departure in September 1932, he came out of his shell again and even gave a diplomatic dinner. I used to think him a good Moslem, but have modified this opinion. He, nevertheless, poses as a believer, is attentive to local personages and affects Arab head-dress.

M. Turakoulov has only once taken leave since he came to Jedda. His wife, a non-Moslem Russian lady from Samara, very plump and blonde, joined him after a long absence late in 1932 and has lived here continuously since. She has had some sort of medical training, and devotes a good deal of her time to a dispensary attached to the Legation. She speaks moderate French and is agreeable to meet, but she and her husband go little into European society.

*Turkey.*

Celâl Bey has been Turkish Chargé d'Affaires for a little over a year, in which time he has spent about eight months here. He was formerly an army officer and did part of his service in the Yemen up to the time of the Turco-Italian War. He is now a man of perhaps 45 or more. He seems to know Arabic well, and, I believe, speaks Italian, but his French is elementary. He entered the Turkish foreign service some years ago and before coming to Jedda had held consular posts at Rhodes, Damascus, Cyprus and, I think, Alexandropol. From the little I know of him I should judge him to be a pleasant and easy-going man, a superficially modernised example of the old Turkish school, not highly competent in any direction. If he has any impetuosity, he shows it in the handling of his wireless sets, which are powerful but very apt to go wrong under his management. His wife, a good example of the modern Turkish woman, not spoilt by progress, could not bear Jedda. Though apparently quite attached to him, she fled after a stay of barely a month to superintend the education of their son in Istanbul, and left Celâl Bey to lead the simple life of an *ancien militaire*. This dispenses him from making any attempt to entertain while in Jedda, though he is reputed to be quite well off.

[E 715/715/25]

No. 11.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received January 30.)*

(No. 4. Confidential.)

Sir,

*Jedda, January 7, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith the Jedda Report for December 1933. This report has been prepared by Mr. Calvert, who was still in charge of the Legation during nearly half of the period under review.

2. Copies have been distributed as in the list appended to the report for January 1933.

I have, &amp;c.

ANDREW RYAN.

[10923]

c 3



Enclosure in No. 11.

# JEDDA REPORT FOR DECEMBER 1933.

## I.—Internal Affairs.

263. Ibn Saud remained in Nejd during the month. From the Saudi press glimpses were obtained of him, early in December, indulging in the pleasures of the chase for ten days at Al Washm, and later, on the 16th, reviewing at Riyadh a contingent of 10,000 soldiers destined for the Asir front (see paragraph 274).

264. Amir Feisal left Mecca for Taif on the 15th, on affairs of State, and returned on the 22nd. His Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Fuad Bey Hamza, visited Jedda on several occasions during the month, and met His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires on the 1st and 10th. He left for Riyadh on the 11th, together with the French Chargé d'Affaires, in circumstances which are described at paragraph 280 below, returning to Mecca on the 21st. He had business interviews with Sir Andrew Ryan on the 28th and 29th.

265. Fuad Bey's brother, Taufiq Hamza, arrived here from Syria on the 10th December, and it was hoped, Fuad Bey informed Mr. Calvert in conversation on that day, to find him a billet in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He had already had a certain amount of experience there as secretary to Fuad Bey, and might be expected to prove useful in the Ministry, the reorganisation of which was now in contemplation.

266. There was a belated echo of the commotion over the designation in May last of Amir Saud as heir apparent (see paragraph 80) in the announcement towards the end of the month that, as from the 1st January, 1934, commemorative postage stamps would be on sale by the Saudi postal authorities.

267. (Reference paragraph 240.) Mr. K. S. Twitchell left Jedda for Port Sudan *en route* for Europe on the 3rd on leave, but whether he will return or not seems open to considerable doubt.

268. Mr. Philby returned from his unexpected business trip to Egypt on the 4th December (see paragraph 241) and appeared to have succeeded in persuading the Ford Motor Company to reconsider their previous refusal to grant him credit facilities to the extent of providing Sharqieh (Limited) with fifty Ford cars on easy terms, to be supplied to the Saudi Government. Sharqieh (Limited) are still said to hold the monopoly for the import of tyres, but, according to one informant, that concession is likely to terminate at the end of the present Arabic year. Mr. Philby has imported a large quantity of tyres, of various makes, and was stated to be negotiating with Muhammad Sadiq, the King's chauffeur, with a view to taking over the latter's stock of tyres held up in the Jedda Customs.

269. The aeroplane bringing Talaat Pasha Harb and three other members of the Egyptian commercial mission to this country (see paragraphs 242 and 254) landed on the afternoon of the 3rd December, when Jedda turned out *en masse* to witness the spectacle. The mission were officially welcomed and were entertained as guests of the Saudi Government for the period of their stay. The aeroplane was a De Havilland Dragon, and was piloted by Mr. G. J. Mahony of Misr-Airwork, S.A.E. Talaat Pasha spent a busy week in Jedda and Mecca, engaged both in business conferences and in undergoing a strenuous course of Saudi hospitality. He distributed largesse broadcast in the shape of samples of goods, especially cheap textiles of Egyptian manufacture, and generously arranged for large numbers of the local inhabitants of Jedda, where the aeroplane remained during the visit, to be taken for short joy-rides over the town. As for the business objects of the visit, it was understood that the agency of the Banque Misr, as regards its purely banking business, was given for the time being to Messrs. Gellatly, Hankey and Co., although it is believed that the bank intends in due course to establish a branch of its own in this country. Local representation of the recently purchased Egyptian pilgrim-ships was confided to Messrs. Haji Abdullah Ali Ridha, but little precise information had, at the end of the month, come to hand regarding the activities of the mission in organising the sale of Egyptian products. It is believed that the question of the transport of pilgrims to this country by air was also raised, but the impression has been gathered that the attitude of the Saudi authorities on this subject was unpromising. The

mission left on the 10th by air for Yanbu, whence Talaat Pasha paid a short visit, by car, to Medina. The flight back to Egypt was resumed on the 13th, and the journey successfully accomplished the same day.

270. The increase in tonnage dues announced in July last (see paragraph 141), and which it was for a time hoped would remain unenforced, is now being levied on all shipping using the Saudi ports of Jedda, Yanbu, Rabigh and Wejh. The effect, in respect of Khedivial steamers, is to double the dues paid by that company, viz., from £3 gold to £6 gold at each port of call.

271. (Reference paragraph 173.) The supply of water to Jedda from the wells at Waziriya has again suffered a setback. Water continues to arrive and the flow is considered satisfactory, but nothing has been done, and to all appearances is likely to be done, to renew at least part of the 7 miles of conduit from the wells to the town. It has now been established that the pipes in the section nearer to the town are not only rotten but are so full of the accumulated filth of ages that the water, reasonably pure at source, arrives in the town highly contaminated. Europeans, therefore, and even natives of the better sort, eschew it. Meanwhile, the indefatigable Sheikh Muhammad Dehlavi and the Waziriya Committee labour to extend the old Turkish conduit further back into the catchment area in the foothills in order to increase the head of water.

272. On the 8th December the *Umm-el-Qura* announced that certain modifications in charges in respect of urgent telegraphic messages, both foreign and inland, were to be introduced in accordance with the decision of the Madrid International Telegraph Conference. The date of the introduction of these charges was not indicated.

273. (Reference paragraph 214.) The economic and financial situation of the country shows no improvement. In spite of determined efforts to reduce expenditure, efforts which have involved, among other things, default in respect of their foreign and internal debts, and non-payment of the salaries of Government employees, the maintenance of large forces in Asir is proving a serious drain on the Saudi Exchequer. Trade is sadly reduced—large stocks are still held from 1932, and pilgrims are now less numerous and seem very largely to be drawn from the poorer classes. There is a temporary buoyancy due to the approaching pilgrim season, but, unless numbers of pilgrims prove unexpectedly large, the ensuing period will witness an economic prostration in Saudi Arabia which may, indeed, be serious.

274. The military situation in Asir (reference paragraph 244) has more or less marked time during December. Reinforcements continued to be drafted south, but in smaller numbers, and it may be supposed that the bulk of Ibn Saud's resources in men and warlike material had been mustered and strategically disposed by the end of the month. Some work on the lines of communication, viz., the road from Taif to Abha, via Qalat Bisha, has been undertaken and motor transport, it is claimed, can now traverse this length of road in five days. The King reviewed, as stated above, a further division of troops, estimated in the press at 10,000 men, at Riyadh on the 16th December prior to their departure for the front. The tribes in Asir remained steady during the period. The uneasiness expressed by Fuad Bey that, provoked by Imamic intrigue, they might precipitate a conflict proved unfounded, but on the 10th Mr. Calvert, under instructions, expressed the hope of His Majesty's Government that Ibn Saud, in his own interests, would make every effort to prevent the tribes from opening hostilities.

There had been, according to Fuad Bey, a few cases of individual desertions to the Yemen, chiefly from the Beni Malik and the Abadil. The general situation will be further dealt with in paragraph 275 below, in connexion with Saudi relations with the Yemen.

## II.—Frontier Questions and Foreign Relations in Arabia.

275. The sky between Saudi Arabia and the Yemen showed some signs of clearing during the month. Correspondence between the King and the Imam, which had been going on for some time (see paragraphs 245 and 246), continued, and Fuad Bey stated to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires on the 10th that the Imam was prepared to give satisfaction over the "minor" point of the disposal of the Idrisi. As for Najran, the King had proposed, as his "last word" on



the subject, that this district should be left as a neutral zone. No reply had since been received, but it was understood that Imamic forces were in course of being withdrawn from Najran (they had razed Badr to the ground on evacuating it) and were being concentrated at four points in the Yemen along the Asir frontier. Other major issues between Ibn Saud and the Imam Yahya were, Fuad Bey declared, still the subject of further long-range elucidation. A day or so after receiving this more encouraging account of the situation, news of a startlingly contrary nature to the effect that an outbreak of war was imminent and that Ibn Saud was proceeding in person to the front was received from a source normally well-informed. Time, however, did not confirm this more desperate view of affairs, and on the 28th December Fuad Bey, who since his last meeting with Mr. Calvert had been away in Riyadh, informed Sir Andrew Ryan that further progress towards agreement had been registered, viz., that (1) the Idrisi was to be removed to Zebid, in the Tihama of the Yemen; (2) the Asir frontier, as it exists at present, was to be recognised by the Imam, both in respect of Asir Surati and Asir Tihama; and that a treaty in due course was to be made in affirmation of this; and (3) intrigues in Saudi Arabia by the Imam were to cease. The problem of Najran still remained unsolved—the Imam had been notified, however, that upon his acceptance or rejection of Ibn Saud's "last word" proposals hung the issue of peace or war. At the end of December, therefore, though the sky was perceptibly bluer, there remained one large and rather threatening cloud, which it is to be hoped the good sense of both parties will soon contrive to dissipate. Meanwhile the position on the frontier is somewhat obscure. There appears to be no foundation for rumours of actual conflict in the direction of the sea, but it has been credibly reported in one unofficial quarter that a clash took place about the middle of the month between Wahhabi forces acting without authority and the Yemenis in Najran.

276. (Reference paragraph 247.) Fuad Bey on several occasions during the month manifested great interest in the movements and progress of Colonel Reilly's mission to Sana. His curiosity for the moment had to remain unsatisfied.

277. The exchange of ratifications of the Saudi-Transjordan Treaty took place in Cairo on the 21st December at the Continental Hotel. The Transjordan representative was Sheikh Fuad Pasha El Khatib, personal adviser to His Highness the Amir. He was accompanied by Mr. A. S. Kirkbride, assistant to the British Resident in Transjordan. The Saudi representative in Cairo, Sheikh Fauzan-el-Sabik, acted for the Saudi Arab Government. The text of the treaty was published in the Mecca *Umm-al-Qura* on the 22nd December.

278. (Reference paragraph 250.) The Saudi Arab Government duly replied to Mr. Calvert's note regarding the camels stolen by the Beni Atiya, confirming Fuad Bey's oral statement that the animals had already been returned to the Transjordan frontier authorities on the 25th November. The Saudi authorities, on their part, also brought to the notice of the Legation on the 21st a number of cases of robbery alleged to have occurred in the neighbourhood of the frontier of Transjordan. The information was passed on to the authorities concerned, but the opportunity was taken of pointing out to the Saudi Minister for Foreign Affairs that, now ratifications of the Saudi-Transjordan treaty had been exchanged, the settlement of questions of this nature by frontier officers direct should present no difficulty. Following the same principle, Sir Andrew Ryan limited himself to oral representations on the 29th December regarding a case in which it was feared that the Governor of Tebuk, having recovered camels raided from Transjordan tribesmen, might hold them pending a settlement of counter-claims in respect of other raids on Saudi subjects, and was believed to have actually retained a percentage of them as "khidma" or "commission on loot."

### III.—Relations with Powers outside Arabia.

279. The question of the indebtedness of the Saudi Arab Government to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Government of India was the subject of a further note addressed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs by Mr. Calvert on the 9th December. The debts are two, one large and one considerably smaller, and the proposals put forward in the latest note suggested the immediate liquidation of the smaller debt, and the payment of interest at

5 per cent. on the larger debt, the repayment in full of which at an early date was also desired. It was felt that these proposals evinced on the part of His Majesty's Government a spirit of consideration for the present financial difficulties of the Saudi Government. Fuad Bey, whom Mr. Calvert informed on the 10th of the despatch of this communication, promised to take up the question personally with Ibn Saud during his visit to Riyadh. No reply, however, had been received from the Saudi Government at the end of the month.

280. M. Maigret, the French Chargé d'Affaires, returned on the 3rd December, accompanied by M. Shukri Tawil, a member of the consulate also returning from leave in Syria. The reappearance of M. Maigret in Jedda, if this ungregarious colleague can be said ever to appear in Jedda, was not for long, as he left for Riyadh by car on the 11th, accompanied by Haji Hamdi, his French-Algerian vice-consul, and was joined *en route* by Fuad Bey Hamza. They reached Riyadh on the morning of the 15th December, and left again on the 18th December, getting back to Jedda and Mecca respectively on the 21st December. The exceptional nature of this visit to the capital of Nejd, foreshadowed by Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman some six weeks earlier (see paragraphs 228 and 256), aroused considerable curiosity locally. Rumours to the effect that the French Government were offering the Throne of Syria to a Saudi prince, that they were engaging in active negotiations regarding the future of the Hejaz Railway or that they were intervening in the Saudi-Yemen dispute may be dismissed. There is strong reason to believe, however, that M. Maigret, despite his bland and seemingly frank assurances on his return that he had gone solely to gratify his passion for travel and to collect material for a book, did discuss matters affecting the relations of France with Ibn Saud and was allowed to go to Riyadh for that purpose as well as to achieve his more personal ambitions, which would have sufficed as an inducement to M. Maigret himself to undertake the journey, but hardly to induce Ibn Saud to authorise it.

281. The Diplomatic Body, apart from M. Maigret, pursued the inevitably even tenor of official existence here. Signor Tonci returned from local leave in Egypt, bringing his wife with him—a lady who has since maintained an almost oriental seclusion. The successor to Signor de Peppo, the Italian Minister who left in the early summer, is Signor Persico, who, however, is only to hold the rank of Chargé d'Affaires. The Persian Chargé left on the 15th, but his successor, Muhammad Ali Khan Maqdam, has still to arrive. The Egyptian consul was galvanised into unwonted activity during the week of Talaat Pasha Harb's visit and, when Sir Andrew Ryan visited him afterwards, had on show in his study a very pretty display of samples.

### IV.—Miscellaneous.

282. Sir Andrew and Lady Ryan returned from leave in the United Kingdom on the 13th, via Port Sudan.

283. (Reference paragraph 185.) Mr. A. N. Van De Poll returned from Europe on the 10th. He intends to remain here during the Haj season, and has already spent part of his time in Mecca. Neither he nor Mr. Philby was averse to celebrating Christmas, it seemed—though most temperately.

284. End-of-year festivities in Jedda were also brightened by the appearance of the American Coon family. Dr. and Mrs. Carlton Coon, stated to represent Harvard University—he is rather young for a doctor of philosophy, and an anthropologist to boot—accompanied by Mr. Waldo Forbes, arrived on Boxing Day with the intention of conducting anthropological investigations in Saudi Arabia. They requested permission to travel across to Riyadh and pursue their researches amongst the Bedouin. Their request was not granted, and, to anticipate the Jedda report for next month, they left here for Aden on the 3rd January. Whilst recently at Sanaa they had discovered, they averred, a Yemeni of distinctly Neanderthal type. It is sad to think that owing to their departure one still lacks scientific confirmation of one's belief that Saudi Arabia can do much better than that.

285. The pilgrimage season has now got fairly under way, a number of ships having arrived. It is still too early to estimate the probable totals, but present indications do not encourage optimism. Few prominent pilgrims have, so far as is known, arrived. Perhaps the most outstanding personage is His Highness Seyyid Sir Taimur-bin-Faisal, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., ex-Sultan of Muscat and



Oman, who landed here on the 7th December and was officially welcomed by representatives of the Saudi Government, whose guest he is understood to be.

286. The *Umm-al-Qura* of the 15th December announced that it is hoped shortly to affix a large clock upon the Government offices in Mecca.

287. The position in regard to the manumission of slaves in December was as follows:—

On hand at the beginning of the month: None.  
Took refuge in December: One male, one female.  
Manumitted in December and repatriated: One female.  
Locally manumitted: None.  
On hand at the end of the month: One male.

One ex-slave man and one ex-slave woman took refuge fearing re-enslavement. The former left again of his own free will. The latter is still on hand.

[E 716/79/25]

No. 12.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received January 30.)*

(No. 5.)

Sir,

*Jedda, January 10, 1934.*

FOR several days after I despatched my telegram No. 226 of the 29th December, there was in Jedda an almost uncanny dearth of news, or even rumours, regarding the Saudi-Yemen situation. A few small straws in the wind seemed to indicate vaguely that it might again be blowing up for war. A posse of well-known ulema arrived in Mecca from Nejd. The object of their visit might have been to stimulate martial ardour, but this surmise is discounted by the fact that it is now Ramadan, a month which the devout like to spend wholly or partly in Mecca. The King's cousin Saud-al-Arafa (see personalities report 1 (23)), who had come to the Hejaz for that purpose, returned unexpectedly to Riyadh. This prince, though outwardly loyal, is believed to be somewhat ill-affected towards the King, and the latter might well like to keep him under his immediate eye, if His Majesty were starting on a distant expedition. Finally, the Emir Feisal, who had promised to dine with Mr. and Mrs. Philby on the 7th January, postponed the engagement at short notice until the 9th, in order to go once more to Taif to review the troops there.

2. The Amir came from Taif to Jedda on the 8th January for the usual dinner in honour of the King's accession. Fuad Bey Hamza came down for the same event, and I had a conversation with him on the 9th January. He described the situation as still uncertain. He stated that some days earlier war had appeared imminent. The King, however, in his eagerness for peace, had made a further concession by proposing to leave the question of Najran in suspense pending a meeting of delegates at Sana or elsewhere, perhaps a place near the frontier, who could discuss the question at the same time that they recorded in treaty form the agreement already reached in principle regarding the *de facto* frontier between Asir and Yemen and the disposal of the Idrisi. Fuad Bey said that he was himself to attend the conference, if it took place, a decision which would appear to indicate the King's wish to ensure precision in any written agreement, as Fuad Bey has had a greater experience of negotiations on civilised lines than any of His Majesty's present advisers.

3. At the outset of the conversation Fuad Bey referred to the Imam's intrigues among the Beni Malik, as though this grievance still existed or had recently revived, but he presently dismissed it as a subsidiary matter. He complained generally of the impossibility of getting straight answers from the Imam, who indulged freely in evasive verbiage. He was unable to tell me anything more about the actual situation in Najran. I questioned him guardedly as to the report reproduced in the penultimate sentence of my telegram No. 226 of the 29th December, describing it simply as a rumour which I had heard. Fuad Bey admitted that certain elements near the frontier, who were co-operating with Ibn Saud but did not form part of his organised forces, had joined the local Najran tribes in repulsing the Yemenis. He said that there had still been no clash between the accredited forces of the two rulers, and that Ibn Saud had explained to the Imam the character of those concerned on his side. Although

any such incident must necessarily be disquieting, I do not think that undue importance need be attached to this particular affair, as it does not seem to have interrupted the curious course of negotiations between principals.

4. We must still be prepared for all contingencies, but my present impression is that Ibn Saud is most anxious to avoid war. He may well think that it would be better in any case to postpone it, if it is to come, until the failure of a formal conference of delegates had demonstrated clearly the impossibility of any reasonable agreement with the Imam. This policy is attended by one disadvantage, namely, that there is not much cool weather left for fighting. On the other hand, a break-down of negotiations on all the points at issue would enable the King to present armed action in a more justifiable light to the Arab and Islamic worlds. It would also allow time for such pilgrims as intend to come to the Hejaz this year, but have not yet started, to get too well on the way to recede for fear of disturbances in the Holy Land.

5. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's representative at Rome.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

[E 775/739/91]

No. 13.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 1.)*

Sir,

*India Office, February 1, 1934.*

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to say that he has had under his consideration the proceedings of the interdepartmental meeting held at the Foreign Office on Thursday, the 5th October, 1933, to discuss relations between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Sheikh of Koweit, and also the Political Resident's despatch of the 25th October, 1933, containing Colonel Fowle's recommendations on the tentative conclusions of the meeting in question in the light of discussion of them with the Political Agent, Koweit.

2. In the light of Colonel Fowle's views, Sir Samuel Hoare is definitely of opinion that the question of declaring a protectorate over Koweit should not at present be further pursued, and he considers that it should be possible to ensure a sufficient degree of British control over the sheikhdom by adopting a policy of tightening up our control over the sheikh as opportunity offers, by filling in the gaps which at present exist in the agreements between the sheikh and His Majesty's Government. The gaps (with the exception of that discussed in the following paragraph and of a slavery agreement) are not, in fact, very serious. Apart from the major assurances contained in the agreement of 1899, the sheikh has already given undertakings in respect of the arms traffic; he is precluded from granting a pearling, sponge-fishing, or oil concession without the approval of His Majesty's Government (though as regards oil the specific undertaking contained in the letter of the 27th October, 1913 (No. XLI on p. 264 of Volume XI of the 1929 edition of *Aitchison's Treaties*), is by no means so clear as could be desired); the control of aviation, whether military or civil, in his State will pass to His Majesty's Government in the event of his accepting the proposals which the Resident has recently been instructed to make to him on this subject; while the proposed amendment of the Koweit Order in Council, once the sheikh's concurrence in this has been obtained, will place the question of jurisdiction over non-Moslem foreigners in his State on a securer and more satisfactory basis.

3. The delicate question of the direct correspondence which has gradually established itself between the sheikh and Ibn Saud remains for consideration. Sir Samuel Hoare has considered the alternatives discussed in paragraph 5 of Colonel Fowle's despatch of the 25th October, and as a result he is of opinion, subject to the views of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that the first alternative suggested by the Resident (which incidentally is, apparently, likely to prove the less objectionable to the sheikh) is the right solution. Subject to Sir John Simon's concurrence, he would propose, however, to approve the Resident's recommendation that Colonel Dickson should approach the sheikh verbally on the lines suggested in paragraph 6 of Bushire despatch under consideration, with the modification suggested in Mr. Johnstone's demi-official letter of the 25th November last to Mr. Laithwaite. Sir Samuel Hoare would also



propose that it might be left to Colonel Fowle's discretion, after the sheikh's attitude has become known, to settle the matter in accordance with either of the alternatives discussed in paragraph 5 of his despatch. The important question whether special action should be taken to emphasise at Jedda to Ibn Saud the nature of the relations which exist between His Majesty's Government and the sheikh might be considered when a report has been received from Colonel Fowle.

4. The question of the obligations of His Majesty's Government for the protection of Koweit, to which the Resident refers in paragraphs 7-11 of his despatch, is one of considerable importance. The general position is examined in the India Office memorandum B. 427/P.Z. 6535/33, of which copies have already been communicated to the Foreign Office. The Secretary of State agrees with the Political Resident that the agreements of 1899 and 1907, containing as they do merely a promise of good offices, the applicability of which to the whole sheikhdom as distinct from the town of Koweit is open to doubt, are not of great material importance so far as "protection" is concerned. The undertaking of real importance is that given to the sheikh in 1914 in return for the co-operation of his predecessor against the Turks.

5. Subject to Sir John Simon's views, Sir Samuel Hoare, on a consideration of the position as a whole, is in agreement with Colonel Fowle's view that the phraseology of this undertaking and the use of the word "sheikhdom" and not "town" would appear to place definitely a responsibility for the protection of the whole principality of Koweit on His Majesty's Government. He is, at the same time, in entire agreement with the Resident that such an obligation, if His Majesty's Government now formally confirm that they recognise its existence, cannot be regarded as relieving the sheikh completely of the responsibility of his own defence, and that "the sheikh should certainly be able to deal with any small raids across his frontiers and should only look for assistance from His Majesty's Government in the case of more serious incursions." Such a construction would, as Colonel Fowle suggests, be consistent with the attitude adopted by His Majesty's Government after the Akhwan operations of 1928-29, though it is relevant that no close examination of the precise obligations in the matter of His Majesty's Government was undertaken at that time. Should Sir John Simon share the views expressed in this paragraph, Sir Samuel Hoare will cause the Resident to be instructed accordingly.

6. While the Secretary of State, as stated above, would be opposed to the declaration of a protectorate, and is satisfied, as at present advised, that the desiderata of His Majesty's Government can be sufficiently secured by indirect tightening up of our control over the sheikh, he is at the same time impressed by the informal character of the engagements which have been entered into on behalf of Koweit. He would, therefore, be disposed to see advantage in consolidating the various undertakings which have from time to time been given on either side in a formal treaty on the lines of the Qatar Treaty of 1916, could this be secured without much difficulty. This would probably involve a reiteration and possibly a more formal specification by His Majesty's Government of their responsibility for protection of the principality of Koweit. Moreover, as stated in the India Office note B. 427/P.Z. 6535/33 on this subject, the assurances at present given to the sheikh are, in practice, renewed to each successor in return for his acceptance of the obligations, liability for which was accepted by his predecessors, and in 1918 it appears to have been held that our obligations held good only so long as the ruling sheikh on his side complied with his engagements. It is arguable that a formal treaty might place a heavier burden on His Majesty's Government without correspondingly binding the sheikh. But it seems doubtful whether this view could, in fact, be sustained. Formal recognition by His Majesty's Government of a Sheikh of Koweit would presumably be necessary before the engagements entered into with previous sheikhs could be regarded as binding on either party. Any formal comprehensive treaty which might be drawn up could presumably be so framed as to make it clear that obligations were entirely reciprocal, and that the liability of His Majesty's Government held good only so long as they were satisfied with the performance by the sheikh of his obligations under the treaty. Finally, so far as protection is concerned, if the view suggested in paragraph 5 above is accepted, that a general liability (within the limits described) for the protection of the principality of Koweit as a whole must already be regarded as resting on His Majesty's Government, no material increase of their responsibilities would be involved in reiterating their acceptance of that liability in a formal treaty,

while the mere fact of reiteration might make it easier to obtain the consent of the sheikh to a consolidating agreement. The Secretary of State would welcome Sir John Simon's views on this point.

7. Subject to the views of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the Secretary of State would suggest that, in view of the small margin of difference which appears to exist between the provisional recommendations of the inter-departmental conference of the 5th October last, the recommendations of the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, and the proposals in this letter, it will be unnecessary, if those proposals commend themselves to Sir John Simon, to refer the question for discussion to the Official Middle East Sub-Committee. Copies of the relevant papers might, however, once final instructions have been sent to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, be circulated for information to the other Departments represented on that committee.

I am, &c.

J. C. WALTON.

[E 819/79/25]

No. 14.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received February 3.)*

(No. 16.)

(Telegraphic.)

Jedda, February 3, 1934.

MY telegram No. 15.

Minister for Foreign Affairs sent Fuad's brother from Mecca yesterday for special purpose of showing me seven telegrams exchanged between Ibn Saud and Imam from 20th January to the night of 31st January-1st February, which would prove contradiction between Imam's words and actions.

Telegrams, although full of polite formulas, contain mutual recriminations regarding incidents in the region of Faifa. Nature of actual incidents does not clearly emerge. On 28th January Imam gave fresh assurances that necessary action had been taken to restrain Abdul Wahhab Idrisi, whom he had thrice [group undecypherable] sent to him. The King's last telegram sent on the night of 31st January justifies measures taken by him, and, without accusing Imam of direct responsibility for incidents, implies that he has tolerated actions of his subordinates and Abdul Wahhab in violation of his promises. Now that matters have reached extreme limit, it lies with Imam, he says, to have it [sic] settled or otherwise. He suggests more doubtfully that Imam's forces have crossed the frontier, whereas he himself has observed mutual agreement that forces should keep away from the frontier. He asks that if Yemeni troops entered his territory, they should be recalled.

Correspondence is, on the face of it, inconclusive, and the messenger had no further communication to make. In these circumstances, it is strange that he should have been sent post haste from Mecca on a Friday to see me. The King's last telegram may have been intended as the equivalent of an ultimatum, in which case the object of the message might be to justify him in the eyes of His Majesty's Government if hostilities between organised forces should suddenly occur. On the other hand, I think he is sincerely anxious to [group undecypherable] appear peaceable until conference can be held. It looks also as though both rulers had difficulty in restraining their sons and other subordinates.

I am returning telegrams with a personal letter, expressing hope that local incidents will be smoothed over so as to enable the conference to meet in peaceful conditions, and have added that His Majesty's Government will certainly share this hope.

I have informed Aden and senior naval officer by telegraph of essential facts up to date. I also telegraphed main facts to Bahrein on 31st January as political agent, Koweit, had got report from Riyadh that a Yemeni contingent had been destroyed by Saudi forces in Najran or elsewhere with the result that Imam had broken off negotiations and ordered an advance.



*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received February 13.)*

(No. 15.)

Sir,

*Jedda, January 23, 1934.*

WITH reference to previous correspondence ending with my telegram No. 9 of the 21st January, I have the honour to transmit herewith a translation of the article on Saudi-Yemen relations, which appeared in the Mecca *Umm-al-Qura* of the 16th January, a number produced exceptionally on that day in anticipation of the three days' festival which follows Ramadan. Having regard to Fuad Bey Hamza's statements to me on the 9th and 16th January, as reported by telegraph, I have seldom seen a more curious publication. Fuad Bey had told me on the former date that Ibn Saud had made a fresh gesture of conciliation and that the Imam's reply to the King's latest proposals was awaited. He told me at midday on the 16th January, by telephone from Mecca, that this position was unchanged. Yet the *Umm-al-Qura* had produced that very morning the obviously inspired article, with which I am now dealing.

2. It is pretty clear that the question of Yemeni activities in the Beni Malik and Abadil area has come into the forefront of the dispute between Ibn Saud and the Imam. My maps and books of reference do not enable me to locate that area, but it would appear to be somewhere in the mountains between Jizan and Sada. As I stated in paragraph 3 of my despatch of the 10th January, Fuad Bey started his conversation with me on the 9th January by a reference to the Imam's intrigues among the Beni Malik, but he presently minimised their importance. It is significant that, in the account given by Colonel Reilly, see Foreign Office telegram No. 6 of the 17th January, of proposals said to have been made by the Imam, he is represented as having asked for the neutralisation of the Beni Malik. It is also significant that mention is made in the Aden Intelligence Summary of the 20th December of a reported application by the Imam's commander at Haradh for sanction to march against the Jebel Beni Malik.

3. If the *Umm-al-Qura* article be taken at its face value, it reads almost as though the heir apparent had gone off on his own, especially as it is implied that he started without a wireless set. I confess that this interpretation, though it would rationalise the article, is intrinsically improbable. The Amir Saud is reputed to be a bit of a fanatic, and his published appeal to the King at the time of the Ibn Rifada affair was an almost reproachful cry of "Let's up and at 'em"; but I have no other reason to suppose that he would defy a parent so strenuous as Ibn Saud.

4. Mr. Philby came to see me on the 22nd January, having returned on the 19th January from spending the festival in Mecca. He does not pretend to be in the inner secrets of the Saudi Government, and he admitted that the situation was most puzzling. He pooh-poohed the *Umm-al-Qura* article, however, and said that he had not read it, and from what he had heard did not think it worth reading, and maintained stoutly that the heir apparent had not left Riyadh until the 15th January, when he had himself sent me, through Mrs. Philby, the news of the Amir's departure. I insisted that an obviously inspired article of this kind in a paper like the *Umm-al-Qura* could not be dismissed so lightly, especially as it could be construed so easily in the sense indicated in the preceding paragraph. Mr. Philby suggested that it was all eye-wash. He admitted that it could have no value as eye-wash for the Imam, and suggested rather feebly that it was intended to reassure public opinion in this country. I observed that, if that were the object, the Saudi Government had set about it in a very extraordinary fashion.

5. Mr. Philby gave me two pieces of information which, if confirmed, are more important than his opinions, for, though not in the inner secret, he has many important contacts. He said that a meeting was to take place at Abha between Fuad Bey Hamza and a representative of the Imam, and that Fuad Bey was only awaiting news of the Yemeni representative's movements before himself starting. Mr. Philby did not think, and represented Fuad Bey as not thinking, that this meeting could produce an agreement. He regards war as inevitable. His second bit of news was that both the King and the Amir Feisal, his son, were going a hunting and that they were to meet. The Amir Feisal, he

said, was made keen to go to the front, but had not been authorised to do so. Mr. Philby did not think that Ibn Saud would be persuaded to deprive the Hejaz of its Viceroy, but the convergence of the two hunts would take the King himself within easier distance of the front.

6. I regret that my information should be so imperfect. I share a general ignorance of what is really toward. Fuad Bey has lain low in Mecca since the 16th December, until to-day, when he arrived unexpectedly in Jedda about midday, and I could not put the questions I should like to ask him by telephone. Rumours reach me in waves, but they are of no value. The latest is that 8,000 of the Atayba have left Taif for the front. The only thing that I can at present see with my own eyes is three-fourths of the Saudi fleet, the three barges mentioned in my telegram No. 6 of the 16th January. It was generally supposed that they would follow the *Besse* steamer, which embarked anything up to 800 soldiers of sorts for Jizan on the 16th December; but they have continued to lie peacefully in full view of my house.

7. The one good result of all these singularities is that they enabled me, in spite of my earlier doubts, to suggest in my telegram No. 9 of the 21st January a form of communication to Fuad Bey, which would show both the Saudi and the Italian Governments that His Majesty's Government were concerned to do what little they could do by words to attempt to restrain Ibn Saud from rushing into war. I received early this morning the telegram, in which you were good enough to approve of this suggestion. I enclose a copy of a letter which I have addressed to Fuad Bey. As I have said above he has arrived in Jedda unexpectedly to-day. The news reached me while my letter was being prepared for signature and while I was drafting this despatch. Being anxious that the letter should reach him before we met, I arranged for Mr. Calvert to deliver it to him personally at 4.30 p.m. I will report any further developments as soon as I have myself seen Fuad Bey.

8. I am sending copies of this despatch and enclosures to His Majesty's representative at Rome and to the Commissioner at Aden. Motives of economy have prevented me from repeating my telegrams to the latter, since I warned him on the 15th January that the situation had deteriorated to an extent which made war a possible eventuality, but I trust that this paper will bring his information up to date.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

Enclosure 1 in No. 15.

*Extract from the Mecca Umm-al-Qura, No. 475 of January 16, 1934.*

BETWEEN RIYADH AND SANA.

(Translation.)

THE exchange of telegraphic communications between His Majesty the King and his Highness Imam Yahya to settle the trouble between the two countries is still going on and His Majesty is still strongly persisting in his efforts for a settlement of the questions in dispute. After a long exchange of communications, the two parties agreed telegraphically on the question of the Idrisis and their position. The Imam Yahya then agreed that the frontier between the two countries should be delimited and that a Treaty of Friendship and Fraternity should be concluded between the two parties for a period of twenty years. The question of Najran has remained unsettled up till now. His Majesty the King finally suggested to his Highness the Imam Yahya that the two questions already agreed upon should be definitely settled and that the treaty should be drawn up, signed and made public immediately. As regards the question of Najran, negotiations should be conducted in a conference to be held for that purpose by delegations from the two parties, with a view to settling it in such a manner as to preserve the interests of both and to prevent harm befalling them. There is still a strong hope that the proposed conference will overcome the difficulties and settle the trouble in a way which will preserve the interests of both parties as well as the interests of the people of Najran themselves. His Majesty the King sent this suggestion to his Highness the Imam



Yahya on the 17th Ramadan (the 3rd January, 1934), but his Highness the Imam Yahya, as frequently happens, delayed his reply either accepting or refusing the suggestion. It happened during that time that certain of those in the mountains of the Tihamat Asir caused disturbances because of the intrigues of certain of his Highness the Imam Yahya's Amirs, which caused a bad effect, particularly in Nejd. Meanwhile, orders had already been issued to his Highness the Amir Saud, heir apparent of the Saudi Arab Kingdom, to march south with a Nejd force; orders had likewise been issued to his Highness the Amir Feisal to march south along the Tihama coast. On the 23rd Ramadan (the 9th January, 1934), however, a message was received from his Highness the Imam Yahya to the effect that he agreed to the suggestion of His Majesty the King and that his Highness admitted the activities and interference of his Amirs, in the matter of stirring up disturbances, amongst the Bani Malik and the Abadil. He stated that he had issued orders to prevent this and asked His Majesty to grant pardon to those who had committed these acts; and he manifested readiness to conclude the treaty and to depute a delegation. Thereupon orders were at once issued to the Amir Feisal to stop his march, but the Amir Saud had already started with a force in cars, and it was not possible for the orders to return to reach him; so he continued on his way.

The Government have made certain that the attitude of his Highness the Amir Saud in that direction of the kingdom will be one ensuring tranquillity in affairs and precluding any aggression or hostility, unless the situation should necessitate it for purposes of defence, which the Government hope will not be the case, they hope also that his Highness the Imam Yahya will expedite the settlement of the matter, so that the Islamic and Arab worlds may repose in the amicable settlement of this affair.

Enclosure 2 in No. 15.

*Sir A. Ryan to Fuad Bey.*

My dear Fuad Bey,

*Jedda, January 23, 1934.*

I HAVE naturally kept my Government fully informed of our conversations regarding the situation between this country and the Yemen, including that of the 9th January when your Excellency was good enough to inform me of the latest proposals made by His Majesty the King to the Imam, the reply to which was awaited, and your telephone message of the 16th January, when you told me that the situation was unchanged, but that the Imam's reply was expected that evening or the next day. I also telegraphed to the Secretary of State a summary of the article which appeared in the *Umm-al-Qura* of the 16th January, and which is referred to in the following communication, which I have been instructed to make to your Excellency in the form of a personal letter.

My Government learnt on the 13th January that Colonel Reilly, who as you know has been at Sana for some time, had just urged on the Imam, not for the first time, the desirability of a friendly settlement of the differences between him and His Majesty and was told that negotiations between the two rulers were progressing. This seemed to tally with what your Excellency had told me on the 9th January, even though the question of Najran still presented difficulty, and as I have stated above, you told me on the 16th January that the position was unchanged. In these circumstances, His Majesty's Government, whose only object is to promote peace and stability in Arabia, are perturbed to learn from the *Umm-al-Qura* that in consequence of some local disturbance His Royal Highness the heir apparent had been ordered to the front before the arrival of a telegram despatched by the Imam on the 9th January, and that the Commander-in-chief in Asir had also been instructed to advance.

Although it is stated in the *Umm-al-Qura* that the latter advance was countermanded on the receipt of the Imam's telegram of the 9th January, my Government cannot but fear that there is a serious danger of an outbreak of hostilities as a result of mere misunderstanding on each side as to the intentions of the other. They earnestly hope that the Saudi Government, who have given so many proofs of their desire for peace, will do their utmost to avert so irreparable a misfortune. They ask me to request the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to convey

this message to the King, with the assurance that it is inspired by the friendliest dispositions towards a ruler, who has constantly shown his confidence in them by asking their advice and that they are ready to continue to use their good offices to promote an amicable settlement, if the negotiations between His Majesty and the Imam are continued.

Yours, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

[E 985/79/25]

No. 16.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received February 13.)*

(No. 22.)

Sir,

*Jedda, January 27, 1934.*

IN my despatch No. 15 of the 23rd January, I brought the story of the latest phase of the quarrel between Ibn Saud and the Imam Yahya up to the afternoon of the 23rd January, when Mr. Calvert handed to Fuad Bey Hamza the personal letter, a copy of which I enclosed in that despatch. There is little of importance to add to what I have telegraphed regarding the later developments, but as Fuad Bey is leaving for Abha to-morrow (not to-day, according to a telephone message he sent me this morning) this is a convenient moment to bring the subject up to date.

2. Fuad Bey read my letter in Mr. Calvert's presence. Before doing this he informed him of his projected visit to Abha, of which I had heard from Mr. Philby the evening before, and asked whether Mr. Calvert could put him in the way of borrowing a sextant, as he hoped incidentally to do something to clarify the geography of those regions. In the course of subsequent conversation he stated that the Yemeni delegate who was to meet him was Seyyid Abdullah Ibn Wazir, who until recently was in command of the Imam's forces on the Asir Tihama front. Fuad Bey expressed himself hopefully about the projected meeting and described his outlook as "optimistic," although, when using the word a second time, he rather qualified it. He did not refer to the movements of the heir apparent or to other matters of detail. He promised to convey my letter to the King by telegraph next day and to acquaint me with His Majesty's reply.

3. I had been anxious not to meet Fuad Bey personally until he had received my letter. He called on me by arrangement on the morning of the 24th January and we discussed the situation fully on the lines reported in my telegram No. 11 of that day. I enclose a fuller account of our conversation, not including the sketch map referred to, which was merely a rough and extempore attempt to illustrate what Fuad Bey was telling me.

4. Fuad Bey returned to Mecca that afternoon. When we parted he thought it unlikely that he would start for Abha before the beginning of February, and even spoke of the possibility of another visit to Jedda. On the 25th January, however, he telephoned that he had had to expedite his plans and would be leaving for Abha on the 27th. I expressed satisfaction at this, as it is obviously desirable in the present highly electrical conditions that the meeting should take place as soon as possible. A few minutes later, he again telephoned to announce that the heir apparent had reached Abha on the 23rd January.

5. The *Umm-al-Qura* of yesterday published a brief announcement regarding the proposed meeting at Abha, giving the names of the two principal delegates and their dates of departure to attend the meeting. The object of the meeting was categorically described as being "the conclusion of the treaty referred to in the leading article in the last issue."

6. The same *Umm-al-Qura* announces that the heir apparent reached Abha on the 24th January, i.e., one day later than Fuad Bey had said; that he has assumed command there; and that he was accompanied by five junior princes. The fact that the Amir is to be definitely in authority at Abha is significant. As you will see by the enclosed record, Fuad Bey stressed the importance of sending to the south a personage of sufficient standing to take decisions. It is possible that the King has delegated to the prince wide powers to make either peace or war.

7. It is clear that the statement of the views of His Majesty's Government which I conveyed to Fuad Bey on the 23rd January, has in no way affected the course of events. I still consider it satisfactory, however, that the statement



should have been made, especially as Fuad Bey exhibited no sort of resentment at your intervention. His attitude throughout his conversation with Mr. Calvert and myself was eminently friendly and sensible. When speaking to Mr. Calvert he again manifested much curiosity as to Colonel Reilly's proceedings at Sana, and expressed spontaneously the hope that they would terminate in a success.

8. I have no further news regarding Saudi military preparations. The three barges are still lying peacefully off Jedda. The most significant pieces of information given me by Fuad Bey were that, when war seemed imminent, it was intended to send the Amir Feisal, the King's son, to the front, and that Ibn Rubaiyan, the Ateyba leader, had marched south. You will have seen from the Koweit intelligence reports that this chieftain was, in the autumn, supposed to be more than half-hearted, but eventually decided to obey the King. Early in the month it was widely rumoured that the Ateyba at Taif were in a rebellious mood and were even creating disturbances in the town. Whatever the facts, the Amir Feisal has gone personally to Taif two or three times since the beginning of January. It may well be that Ibn Rubaiyan's Ateyba have latterly been not so much disaffected as impatient for action.

9. I am sending copies of this despatch and enclosure to His Majesty's Ambassador in Rome and to the Commissioner at Aden.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

Enclosure in No. 16.

*Note respecting the Saudi-Yemen Situation.*

FUAD BEY HAMZA called on me this morning. We had a long conversation, parts of which were rather involved. The following, though not an exact record, gives the gist of what passed:—

Fuad Bey confirmed what he had told Mr. Calvert yesterday afternoon about his proposed journey to Abha to meet a representative of the Imam. I asked whether this was to be the actual conference which had been foreshadowed or merely a preliminary. Fuad Bey said that, in the intentions of his Government, it was to be the conference. He added in reply to a further question that he would have colleagues, but he did not name them; nor did he appear to know of any Yemeni delegate other than Seyyid Abdullah Ibn Wazir, the general who has been in command at Haradh and who has now been called to Sana. News of this gentleman's departure for Abha was awaited, and Fuad Bey would then proceed. He was to go from Mecca by car via Bisha. He hoped to vary his route coming back and to do some geographical work, but sounded doubtful as to whether he would venture as far as Najran for this purpose.

I told Fuad Bey that I had been completely mystified by the apparent discrepancies between the *Umm-al-Qura* article of the 16th January, and what he had told me. I said that I now reduced the areas in dispute to three, although there might be more. Firstly, there was Asir Tihama. Here Ibn Saud was in a strong position, and my only difficulty was that we had never been told what the inland boundary of Asir Tihama was. The Saudi Government appeared to be unwilling to supply this information, though I had given him frequent opportunities of telling me the effect of the Saudi Idrisi Treaty of 1920. Inverting the geographical order, I next took Najran, both the history and geography of which were doubtful. If Fuad Bey was becoming a geographer, I was becoming an historian, and I could not discover that either of the disputants had really held Najran in recent times. That was why I favoured the idea of its being made a neutral area.

Between these two areas I said there was a mountainous region, partly Asir Tihama and partly Asir Surat, though I could not say where they met. I inferred from the *Umm-al-Qura* article that the Beni Malik and Abadil, who appeared to be now an important bone of contention, were in the highlands of Asir Tihama.

I explained why the account of events in the *Umm-al-Qura* article had so baffled me. It almost read as though the Amir Saud had gone off on his own, though this was in itself incredible. Why, for instance, had so important a personage got no wireless?

Fuad Bey observed that if there were any discrepancy between statements of his and a newspaper article, his own statements must naturally be preferred. He did not seriously pretend that the article was anything but inspired, but he intimated that some of the dates might not be quite right. His main line of defence was, however, that the Imam's actions were quite at variance with his words. The fact was that at some time before the 9th January the Imam's activities among the Beni Malik and Abadil had gone the length of invasion and occupation, and his forces were accompanied by Seyyid Abdul Wahhab al-Idrisi, despite the Imam's promise to relegate the Idrisi to Zebid. It was in consequence of these activities, which had created a storm of indignation in Saudi circles, that arrangements had been made for the Amir Saud to go to the front and for his brother the Amir Feisal (for it was to him and not to Feisal-bin-Saud that the *Umm-al-Qura* referred), to go south also. War seemed inevitable, and it was necessary that a person of the heir apparent's authority should be on the spot to take decisions. He had gone off on a date of which Fuad Bey said he was himself ignorant, taking one of Sir F. Humphrys's wireless sets on which he could receive messages, but which could not transmit more than 200 miles. His objective was Bisha, but up to last evening there was no news of his arrival there. He would probably get there about now. Meanwhile, reassuring telegrams had come from the Imam and the Abha meeting had now been arranged. The trouble was that, when he sent his messages, the Imam had not discontinued his activities in the Beni Malik and Abadil country. The King, showing amazing patience, had fallen back there in order to avoid a conflict. Military preparations were still in progress on the Saudi side owing to the ambiguousness of the Imam's attitude. The troops embarked here on the 16th January were part of the forces, which the Amir Feisal (Ibn Abdul-Aziz) was to have commanded. Ibn Rubaiyan, the Ateyba leader, had also moved south from Taif.

I observed that it was natural to suppose that the Amir Feisal mentioned by the *Umm-al-Qura* as having been ordered to march along the Tihama, was the Commander-in-chief in Asir. I was glad to get the correction, but it would be even graver if the King's son, Feisal, had also been despatched. For the rest, I accepted Fuad Bey's explanations without much criticism and with sympathy, but said I had one complaint. I had been left to infer the importance of the Beni Malik and Abadil area in the recent stages. I looked for greater confidence than this showed. We had really done our utmost, more than he perhaps realised, to avert a conflict. We had used influence to restrain the Imam, indirectly—he knew what I meant—and then directly when the presence of Colonel Reilly at Sana gave us the opportunity. It was a condition of using influence with the Imam that we should use influence with Ibn Saud. We could only work with the Italians in friendly understanding, all the more so as the European situation required close collaboration with them. I had been really alarmed just after the 16th January lest war should be imminent and my Government had shared my alarm. Hence the letter I had sent to him yesterday under instructions. Mr. Calvert, I said, had foreshadowed a written communication in the event of the issue of an ultimatum when it was thought that an ultimatum might be issued at any moment. The situation after the 16th January had presented an appearance so comparable in its dangerousness that the written communication had now been made.

Fuad Bey assured me of the King's pacific intentions. The King could not put up with anything and everything, but he had astonished Fuad and others by his patience, e.g., by falling back in the Beni Malik and Abadil area. He himself, Fuad, was strongly desirous of peace. What the King held he must hold, but the country needed repose. They could not put their house in order if there were always troubles. He would go to Abha full of the most sincere desire to arrive at a settlement. I said that for my part I had been firm in the belief that there would be no war if the King could avoid it, and that all His Majesty's efforts were directed towards an honourable settlement. I admitted that the Imam was a very difficult person to negotiate with. I expressed confidence that every effort would be made on the Saudi side to reach a satisfactory conclusion at Abha and wished Fuad every success in his mission.

In the course of the conversation Fuad Bey showed me roughly on a map the lie of the land. He traced the boundary between Asir Tihama and the Yemen in a sort of S shape, starting eastward from the sea, then running northward so as to leave the Jebel Razih on the Yemeni side and Jebel Faifa on the Saudi side further north; then bending round again to the east. He placed the Abadil and



the Beni Malik along this last bend, that is to say north of the Jebel Faifa. He half promised to send me a sketch map on the lines of the attached very rough pencil sketch<sup>(1)</sup> which he made to illustrate his explanation.

January 24, 1934.

A. R.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not reproduced.

[E 988/79/25]

No. 17.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received February 13.)*

(No. 26.)

Sir,

Jedda, January 30, 1934.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 14 of to-day, I have the honour to enclose a translation of the letter which Fuad Bey Hamza addressed to me on the 28th January regarding the situation between Saudi Arabia and the Yemen.

2. I have not had any further light on the situation since I wrote my despatch No. 22 of the 27th January, except that the three motor barges mentioned in paragraph 8 of that despatch and earlier reports left this morning apparently for Jizan. I am not telegraphing this for the moment, but may do so if I hear that they carried any important number of troops. At present I am more interested in the Amir Feisal, who again went from Mecca to Taif a few days ago and who may possibly be preparing to go south.

3. I am sending copies of this despatch and enclosure to His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome and to the Commissioner at Aden.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

Enclosure in No. 17.

*Fuad Bey Hamza to Sir A. Ryan.*

(Translation.)

Dear Sir Andrew,

Mecca, January 28, 1934.

I AM writing to you just before I leave Mecca for Abha in order to acknowledge your private letter of the 23rd January, 1934, about the development of the situation between this country and the Yemen. We had a conversation on this question on Wednesday last, which I believe has shown you the truth of the matter and has made clear that the measures taken were by way of preparation for eventualities, once it had been proved to us that the actions of Imam Yahya were at variance with his statements. I have communicated a copy of your letter, referred to above, to the proper person, and have also indicated the explanations I made to you. It was then found most appropriate that I should summarise the recent situation for you as follows:—

Our attitude as regards our desire for peace and friendship with the Imam Yahya remains unchanged. Our proof of this is the manner in which we have strongly urged the Imam Yahya to have the difficulty brought to an end, while all our forces are concentrated on the frontiers and entirely ready, but have taken no action, thank God, which might provoke a quarrel between us and Yahya, and in spite of our having ascertained that while he was corresponding and compacting with us for peace and friendship he was, on the other hand, doing the opposite by provoking insurrection in the Tihama area; for he sent Abdul-al-Wahhab-al-Idrisi, who is under his protection and for whose action he is responsible, gave him money and arms and thus stirred up the inhabitants of the highlands of the Tihama such as the Ahl Faifa, the Beni Malek and the Abadil until they expelled those of our Amirs who were with them. He also took pledges from the people of those mountains. The Imam's intention in deferring a settlement is to cause insurrection and strife so that, if he finds an opportunity, he will break the peace and do whatever he likes. His Majesty the King has frankly acquainted Yahya with the facts and strengthened the forces with extra ones in

preparation for eventualities. He has also issued his orders to his Highness the Amir Saud to proceed to that quarter for two reasons:—

*Firstly.*—To prevent our forces from any act of aggression, particularly after the Imam Yahya had broken (his) promise, when we feared that our tribes would retaliate.

*Secondly.*—To modify the system of war in preparation for eventualities.

The advance of the forces from our side to the vicinity of the frontier was due to the fact that the people of that area, for example the Masariha, the Beni Shubeyl and the Al-Mareth, who are close to the frontier, had shown our Amir subversive letters which they had received from the Idrisi and from some of the Imam Yahya's officials. It was thus found inevitable to advance as far as Samta in order to reassure them and to prevent insurrection, and also to fortify our posts in the mountain district, also in preparation for eventualities.

What seems most probable is that the position will be altered by the insurrection which the Imam Yahya is stirring up. It is therefore not unlikely that incidents will occur as actually did happen with Abdul Wahhab-al-Idrisi, particularly because all the people of the Tihama who are subjects of Imam Yahya are saying that the Imam wants peace negotiations only to deceive so that he can subsequently find an opportunity to break his engagements.

Despite all this His Majesty's orders are continually issued to prevent any advance to the frontiers of the Yemen. The situation will remain the same until the conclusion of the conference which is to be held at Abha, whether or not that conference succeeds. If, however, there occurs a definite act of hostility on the part of the Imam Yahya, we shall then have to defend ourselves.

Yours sincerely,

FUAD HAMZA.

[E 1102/715/25]

No. 18.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received February 19.)*

(No. 30.)

Sir,

Jedda, February 3, 1934.

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith the Jedda report for January 1934. Copies have been distributed as per the list annexed to the report.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

Enclosure in No. 18.

JEDDA REPORT FOR JANUARY 1934.

PREFATORY NOTE.—It may be well to observe that the form "Saudi Arabia" is used by the Foreign Office and this Legation as the English name for Ibn Saud's dominions at the express request of the Saudi Government. The approved French form would appear to be "Arabie Soudite," as this is used on the new stamps issued for sale on the 1st January.

I.—Internal Affairs.

FAST and festival filled the first two-thirds of January. What with short endurable days and the excitement in the south, Ramadhan had a less deadening effect in high official circles than it sometimes has. The ensuing festival or Id, which began on the 17th January, was observed in as holiday a spirit as any English Christmas. Riyadh remained the King's headquarters throughout the month. Hunting excursions were again reported. The quidnuncs suggested that the real object of His Majesty's outings was to go among the tribes and ginger-up their warlike spirit. The heir apparent went from Riyadh to Asir about mid-January (see paragraph 12 below).

2. The Amir Feisal was much concerned with affairs at Taif, where there was a concentration of troops of unknown dimensions, apparently with the double object of organising the tribal levies for war and restraining them from disorderly



conduct in the town. He visited it at short notice about the 6th January and came direct from Taif to Jedda on the 8th January to celebrate the King's accession. The ceremonial on this occasion was again confined within the discreet limits considered desirable since the Ulama of Nejd protested in 1931 against annual celebrations. The diplomatic representatives were asked to present their congratulations to the Governor of Jedda. They and a good many other guests attended a dinner at the Khuzam Palace in the evening at which the Amir presided. On the 9th January the Prince dined with Mr. and Mrs. Philby, now installed in the old Green Palace, in a more select company including Sir Andrew and Lady Ryan, the Netherlands Chargé d'Affaires, Fuad Bey Hamza, the Minister of Finance and a few other Arab notabilities. Next evening he left for Mecca, having, in the afternoon, received Captain Sandford of H.M.S. *Hastings*.

3. Fuad Bey Hamza was twice available for business in Jedda. Like the Amir Feisal he arrived on the 8th January and had conversations with His Majesty's Minister on the 9th and 10th January before leaving on the latter date. He came again on the 23rd January, but only for the inside of two days and found on his return to Mecca that he had to expedite his departure for Abha, of which more anon.

4. General business continued to be very slack. A number of cars were, however, imported, about thirty by Sharqieh (Limited) and forty by Gellatly Hankey and Co. Two projects for the economic development of the country came suddenly into the limelight after a long period of stagnation. These are described in the following paragraphs.

5. Mr. A. Ydlibi, a naturalised British Syrian merchant in Manchester, has long wished to do more for Saudi Arabia than merely sell her piece-goods. Although his business is comparatively small, he claims to have important backing, and is prepared to take on mines, railways, indeed anything big. He has recently joined forces with the Eastern and General Syndicate (Limited) to form the Arabia Development Syndicate (Limited), whose power of attorney he holds. The first objective now is to get a concession for oil in the Koweit Neutral Zone from Ibn Saud and the Sheikh of Koweit. Ydlibi's agent, another Syrian named Awayni, went to Riyadh early in January and on his return came to see His Majesty's Minister, to whom he related a glowing tale on the 9th January. They had the Sheikh as good as in their pocket; the King had been most forthcoming; all he wanted was that everything should be British. Mr. Awayni spoke in more general terms of hopes of another concession for oil in the Northern Hejaz.

6. Awayni is an intimate friend of Fuad Bey Hamza; indeed, the scandal-mongers said in January that these two and others had formed a little combine to supply the new clothes for the ladies of the harem on the occasion of the Id. But it was as a Minister, not as a friend or partner of Awayni, that Fuad Bey consulted Sir Andrew Ryan next day as to the standing of the syndicate, the view taken of it by His Majesty's Government and the procedure to be followed in regard to the Sheikh of Koweit's interest. It was clear from Fuad Bey's statement that the King had not committed himself, but Fuad Bey also represented His Majesty as being all for ensuring the British character of future enterprises. The whole delicate subject was referred to His Majesty's Government.

7. Abdul Hamid Bey Shedd, who acted or professed to act for the ex-Khedive in connexion with the State Bank project of last year, reappeared in Jedda on the 9th January. He was not entreated on his arrival as kindly as most concession-hunters, but he quickly got into touch with the Saudi Government. He now purports to represent a new company formed in London under the auspices of a firm called J. S. Bartholomew and the name of the Hejaz Development Corporation (Limited). He recited a list of imposing names of magnates in the City of London, whose support it was hoped to enlist. Among them were Viscount Goschen, Lord Glenconner and Sir E. Mount. Shedd sought a concession similar to that of last year, with provision for a smaller initial loan to be made up to the larger figure later, and probably with more emphasis on other concessions as a *quid pro quo*. In this case also Fuad Bey was instructed to consult Sir Andrew Ryan as to the standing of the corporation and the prospect of support from the magnates.

8. No important developments are reported at the Jedda end in connexion with Talaat Pasha Harb's enterprises (paragraph 269 of the report for December), but he is understood to be busy in Egypt, and to have taken, or to be in treaty, for a house now in course of construction here.

9. A Polish professor named Wilniewiczyc arrived about the 8th January and stayed a week or ten days with Mr. Philby. He is understood to have come to make a further effort in connexion with the debt of £30,000 still outstanding in respect of arms, &c., supplied to the Saudi Government by a Polish group in 1930, but to have discussed also the possibility of their supplying further arms, &c., on a large scale. On credit, of course.

10. The financial situation of the Saudi Government continues to be most precarious. Money seems to have been found to make certain payments to officials and the like in anticipation of the Id, but salaries are still heavily in arrears, and only the most urgent payments are made. When on the 10th January Sir Andrew Ryan followed up Mr. Calvert's representations (paragraph 279 of the report for December) regarding the debts due to His Majesty's Government and begged Fuad Bey to consider most seriously the importance of satisfying their now very moderate demands, Fuad Bey said, under the King's instructions, that, in view of the penury of the Treasury, His Majesty would have to consider giving it help out of his personal resources, if His Majesty's Government insisted. Did they, he caused Fuad Bey to ask, wish to put him in such a position? Considering his relations with his Government, this attitude can only be considered disingenuous.

11. There is little to be said about the general internal situation. Mention has been made above of restlessness at Taif. The situation in Asir has become so much a part of the Saudi-Yemen dispute that it can but be dealt with below. That situation naturally stimulates speculation as to the future of the Saudi régime, but the country seems to be pretty well held. The *Umm-al-Qura* of the 5th January denied a rumour in the Egyptian press that Ibn Saud intended to place parts of his dominions, e.g., the Hejaz, under the supervision of a "neutral" Shereef, meaning, it was suggested, one of the branch whose head, Shereef Ali Haydar, now resides at Beirut. The King would have to be very far gone before he could conceivably contemplate such a step.

## II.—Frontier Questions and Foreign Relations in Arabia.

12. The Saudi-Yemen situation dominated everything else in January. The improvement recorded in paragraph 275 of the report for December was not maintained. On the 9th January Fuad Bey told Sir Andrew Ryan that war had appeared imminent some days before, but that the King had made a fresh gesture of conciliation by offering to let the question of Najran stand over until it could be discussed at the conference to be held to reduce to treaty form the agreements reached on other points. The Imam's reply was, he said, awaited. He telephoned on the 16th January that this was still the position, but he confirmed a report of the previous day that the heir apparent had gone to the front. When this conversation took place the *Umm-al-Qura* of that morning had already published a very remarkable article, explaining that, although the Imam had telegraphed on the 9th January accepting the King's proposals, the gravity of the earlier situation had decided the Government to send both the heir apparent and the Amir Feisal (the King's son, not his cousin the Commander-in-chief at Abha) to the front at the head of forces from Nejd and the Hejaz. On receipt of the Imam's telegram the despatch of the Amir Feisal was countermanded, but the heir apparent had already left and was, according to the *Umm-al-Qura*, out of reach of communication.

13. These facts, taken in conjunction with other indications, e.g., the hurried chartering of a Besse steamer to take troops to Jizan on the 16th January, revealed a very definite danger of hostilities, despite the apparent narrowing of the political issues. His Majesty's Government decided to urge on Ibn Saud in express terms the dangers of the situation and the importance of avoiding an outbreak of war which might be the result of mere misunderstanding on each side of the intentions of the other. These representations were embodied in a personal letter addressed by Sir Andrew Ryan on the 23rd January to Fuad Bey, who arrived in Jedda just in time to receive it. His attitude in ensuing conversations, and still more the contents of his formal reply of the 28th January, written after reference to the King, disclosed more of the true situation than had been definitely known before. The Imam had, indeed, agreed to a conference; so much so that Fuad Bey was about to proceed to Abha to meet a Yemeni delegate. But, Fuad Bey explained, the Imam's actions were entirely



at variance with his words, especially his actions or those of his subordinates in the mountains forming the backbone of Asir Tihama, i.e., the region north-west of Sada inhabited by the Beni Malik, the Abadil and the Ahl Faifa. In conversation Fuad Bey accused the Yemenis of having actually invaded this area, and having thus produced the critical situation of the early days of January. He represented the King as having pushed patience to the extreme limit by withdrawing his forces to avoid conflict. In his subsequent letter, however, the accusation was that the Imam's intrigues, including the despatch into the area of Abdul Wahhab-al-Idrisi, had produced a revolt of the local tribes, who had expelled the Saudi Governors. Other intrigues among the Masariha, &c., had made it necessary to advance the Saudi forces to Samta. The latter mentioned the risk of incidents and hinted at the possibility of hostilities if the Saudi Government were compelled to defend themselves against attack, though their intention was to await the outcome of the conference.

14. The heir apparent, accompanied by no less than five junior princes, arrived at Abha about the 24th January and took over the command. Fuad Bey left for the same destination on the 28th January. The Yemeni delegation was to have left Sana on the 25th January, but is reported as having delayed its departure owing to changes in its composition. The position at the end of the month, as seen from the north, may be summed up thus:—

- (a) There had been no slackening in the Saudi military preparations. In addition to the troops embarked for Jizan on the 16th January, further forces had been shipped in the Government's three motor dhows on the 30th January. The Ateyba, under their chief, Ibn Rubaiyan, had marched south from Taif at some moment previous to the 24th January, when Fuad Bey informed Sir Andrew Ryan of this movement.
- (b) There had been no fighting on the Asir Tihama front, and Ibn Saud was still apparently leaving it to the local tribesmen to cope with any remaining Yemeni activity in Najran. The situation in the mountainous region between was very tense. It was not clear that the Imam had intervened directly in that area, but he had evidently fomented trouble there. There were indications that his object was not so much to obtain possession of the country of the Beni Malik, &c., as to "neutralise" it in the same way as it had already been proposed to neutralise Najran.
- (c) A conference was definitely in prospect, the outcome of which seemed likely to decide the question of peace or war, unless war should break out earlier owing to the strained situation near the frontier and the massing of forces there.

15. Nothing of importance happened in January on Ibn Saud's other frontiers. The practical arrangements for the working of the machinery contemplated in the Saudi-Transjordan Treaty had not yet been completed, and occasional complaints continue to reach the Legation in connexion with minor matters. There is a press rumour that the Iraqi Government have appointed a Chargé d'Affaires in Jedda, but the Legation has had no confirmation of this. Flags were flown on the 26th January in honour of the marriage of King Ghazi.

16. (Reference paragraph 225 of last year.) The *Saut-al-Hejaz* stated on the 8th January that the Iraqi Government were proposing to assign "reasonable sums" for the opening up of the projected pilgrim road between Najaf and Medina, and that the completion of this project was expected within the next year.

### III.—Relations with Powers outside Arabia.

17. Reference is made elsewhere to conversations between His Majesty's Minister and Fuad Bey Hamza. All intercourse with the Saudi Government was extremely amicable. Only two other subjects are worthy of special mention. Sir Andrew Ryan had drawn attention on the 29th December to a report from Koweit that three State prisoners at Riyadh, including Ibn Hithlayn and Ibn Lami, who had been surrendered to Ibn Saud under certain guarantees early in 1930, had been done to death. On the 9th January Fuad Bey conveyed to Sir Andrew Ryan the King's assurance that

these two men were alive, and added, in reply to a question, that the third, the once-famous Sultan Ibn Bujad, was also alive. It seems probable that the prisoners were, in fact, removed some time ago to Hofuf, but when an enquiry about this was passed on to the King, he excused himself from disclosing their whereabouts. On the 24th January Sir Andrew Ryan spoke to Fuad Bey about two of the ad-Dabbagh conspirators to whose presence in India the Saudi Government had taken exception. He had just written to say that these two men, Tahir-ad-Dabbagh and one Sadiq, had been called upon to leave India. He now added orally that they might be expected to appear next in Iraq, a country the access to which could not be denied them by His Majesty's Government.

18. The Netherlands Chargé d'Affaires left for Sana on the 23rd January for the exchange of ratifications of the Netherlands-Yemen Treaty, which he signed during an earlier visit last year. M. Adriaanse took with him an engineer named Flieringa, who arrived from Holland on the 14th January; M. Andresen, one of the managers of International Agencies (Limited), an Anglo-Dutch concern, whose principal business is the agency of the British and Dutch Blue Funnel lines; a Dr. Hartman, who has practised medicine in Jedda for about a year under the auspices of the Netherlands Legation, International Agencies and the Dutch Bank; and an interpreter. Although this mission is not so imposing as its composition may suggest, its members are doubtless bent on exploring the possibilities of the Yemen for business purposes. Some have thought that, having regard to the Saudi-Yemen situation, the choice of the time of their journey from Jedda to Sana on non-urgent business was unhappy.

19. The new Persian representative, who transliterates his name Mohammed Ali Khan Mogaddam, arrived on the 8th January, accompanied by a new secretary. He proves to be a full Minister. His outlook is modern and his French good. He promises to be an agreeable colleague.

20. The Egyptian consulate has been reinforced by a permanent medical officer, Dr. Aly Askar-el-Ghandour. He is to preside over the medical mission sent annually to the Hejaz for the pilgrimage and to conduct a dispensary in Jedda.

21. There is little to record about the other foreign missions in Jedda. Nothing more has been heard of the business on which the French Chargé went to Riyadh in December. He and the Italian Chargé lived in almost complete seclusion during the month. It is not known whether the latter has kept in touch with the Saudi Government in regard to Yemen affairs, but he has not of late sought or afforded any opportunity for discussion between him and the British Legation.<sup>(1)</sup> Mr. Lenahan, the representative of the Standard Oil Company of California (paragraph 211 of the report for October), is understood to aspire to the position of United States consul.

### IV.—Miscellaneous.

22. H.M.S. *Hastings* visited Jedda from the 10th to the 14th January. This was the last appearance of the present senior naval officer, Captain C. S. Sandford, O.B.E., whose impending departure from the Red Sea will be regretted. As the Amir Feisal was in Jedda on the day of the arrival of *Hastings*, His Majesty's Minister was able to present Captain Sandford that afternoon.

23. An American yacht, the *Camargo* of (?) Cincinnati, visited Jedda on the 11th January. Its wealthy owner, a Mr. Fleischman, was on board. One of his guests was said to be the mightiest fisherwoman in the States. But they liked Jedda so little, and left so quickly, that she left neither name nor story.

24. An elderly American ornithologist called Bates, who resides near Chelmsford after a life spent in South Africa, arrived in Jedda in January with some sort of credentials from the British Museum. An enthusiastic collector and student, he promises to add considerably to what is known of bird life in the coastal region around Jedda. He is staying with Mr. and Mrs. Philby, who now have so many guests that they have arranged a mess for them in their new home, the Green Palace. Mr. Philby has realised another of his dreams by

<sup>(1)</sup> There is no definite news as to when the new Italian representative will arrive, but M. Tonci hopes to get away in March.



establishing the exact longitude of Mecca. He claims to have upset the conclusions of a Royal Commission. Fortunately it was a Dutch one.

25. The Id was followed by stormy weather and a cold snap which lasted some days. The temperature indoors fell more than once to about 60 F. in the early morning. This doubtless kept up the spirit of Christmas cheer. Anyhow, the European community in Jedda has gone very, very gay. Ladies are still in short supply, but they go round like anything. It has become quite difficult to compose a dinner-party at a few days' notice. Picnics, wireless auditions, private cinema shows, and all the apparatus of occidental civilisation, now compete with the rigours of life among the Wahhabis. The one American citizen, Mr. Lenahan, brings more than one man's quota to this social revolution. The last evening of January witnessed the first real "hot-dog" party in the Hejaz. Sausage sandwiches by a moonlit sea were rated one of the happier results of the grant of the Hasa Oil Concession to an American group.

26. The outlook for the pilgrimage is rather brighter. The total of overseas pilgrims in 1934 may now be expected to exceed the figure for last year by some thousands, unless war with the Yemen should produce an adverse effect. The numbers of pilgrim ships and pilgrims for January were as follows:—

From India: Three ships, bringing a total of 2,029 pilgrims.  
From Straits Settlements: One ship, bringing ninety pilgrims.

27. The position in regard to the manumission of slaves in January was as follows:—

On hand at the beginning of the month: 1 male.  
Took refuge in January: 2 females.  
Manumitted in January and repatriated: 1 male and 1 female.  
Locally manumitted: Nil.  
Left Legation voluntarily: 1 female.  
On hand at the end of the month: Nil.

The slave woman who left voluntarily had fled from the household of the Amir Feisal. The case threatened to reopen the thorny question of Royal slaves. After His Majesty's Minister had discussed the case with Fuad Bey and prepared a telegram asking for approval of an arrangement for her manumission by the Amir in agreement with the Legation, the young woman fled, having apparently found the slave quarters in the Legation less agreeable and life there more boring than what she was accustomed to.

Copies of this report have been distributed as follows:—

The High Commissioner, Cairo.  
The Governor-General, Khartum.  
The Commissioner, Port Sudan.  
His Majesty's Minister, Addis Ababa.  
The Governor, Lagos.  
The High Commissioner, Jerusalem.  
His Majesty's consul-general, Beirut.  
His Majesty's consul, Damascus.  
His Majesty's Ambassador, Bagdad.  
His Majesty's consul, Basra.  
The Political Agent, Koweit.  
The Political Agent, Bahrein.  
The Political Resident, Bushire.  
The Chief Commissioner, Aden.  
The Viceroy, New Delhi.  
The Governor, Singapore.  
The High Commissioner, Kuala Lumpur.  
The Commander-in-chief, Mediterranean Station, Malta.  
The Senior Naval Officer, Red Sea Sloops.  
The Royal Air Force Officer Commanding in Palestine and Transjordan.

[E 1103/79/25]

No. 19.

Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received February 19.)

(No. 33.)

Sir,

Jedda, February 6, 1934.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 16 of the 3rd February, I have the honour to forward herewith a careful précis of the telegrams regarding the Saudi-Yemen situation, which Taufiq Bey Hamza came from Mecca to show me on the 2nd February.<sup>(1)</sup> Although I took copies of the telegrams before returning them, I think that you will find them at least as intelligible in this form as if I submitted even lengthier literal translations.

2. It is no new thing for Ibn Saud to cause sheaves of telegrams to be brought to the knowledge of the Legation by special emissaries. What is more unusual is that all the present telegrams are carefully dated, and that steps were taken to communicate to me the last and most important of them within forty-eight hours of its despatch. I may add that Taufiq Bey, who has none of his brother Fuad's experience and little of his assurance, appeared to be terribly nervous. He speaks French quite passably, but he begged me to provide an interpreter, although he had nothing to do except to hand me the texts for perusal and return.

3. I do not feel that at this stage I can add anything useful to the comments contained in my telegram under reference. The situation seems to be approaching some sort of a *dénouement*, and will probably have taken on a quite new aspect by the time you receive this despatch. I need only call your attention to the fact that the correspondence, judged by the references and internal evidence, does not appear to be quite complete. There is much about incidents in the frontier region, but little to indicate their exact nature.

4. You are aware that the Jebel Faifa is extremely marginal. In this connexion I may refer back to paragraph 5 of my despatch No. 23 of the 17th January, 1933.

5. Taufiq Bey left the telegrams with me on the understanding that I should return them to him as soon as possible. Before I could do so, however, he decided not to wait, and requested me to send the texts after him under cover of a personal letter. This gave me an opportunity of writing next day a letter, of which I enclose a copy,<sup>(1)</sup> and of expressing in it my hope that the local incidents would be smoothed over, so as to enable the conference to meet in favourable conditions.

6. I still hear of great military activity in connexion with the collection of motor transport and the mobilisation of further troops. There is said to be much recruiting in the Northern Hejaz and the adjoining parts of Nejd, e.g., Hail.

7. With reference to the concluding portions of paragraph 5 of my despatch No. 15 of the 23rd January, and paragraph 2 of my despatch No. 26 of the 30th January, I now learn from two independent sources, of which Mr. Philby is one, that the Amir Feisal went three or four days ago to hunt at a place not far from Medina. This is unexpected news, as I rather thought that the Amir might leave Taif for the south at any moment. It is barely possible that the report of his going north is a blind, but it is hardly in the Saudi manner to use such a device rather than to maintain silence. Mr. Philby suggests that the Amir and the King may intend to meet, though not in the direction he at first suggested. He still says that the Amir is eager to go south, but that, in his opinion, the King will not let him go. As for myself, I am still greatly interested in the prince's movements, but I prefer to hazard no surmise as to the ultimate intentions of either father or son in this respect.

8. I am sending copies of this despatch and enclosures to His Majesty's Ambassador in Rome and His Majesty's Chief Commissioner at Aden.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.



[E 1206/1206/91]

No. 20.

*Sir P. Loraine to Sir John Simon.—(Received February 23.)*

(No. 72.)

Sir,

*Angora, February 13, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you, as a matter of possible interest, that the United States Embassy in Angora recently enquired whether a copy of the Anglo-Turkish Treaty of the 29th July, 1913, which delimited the frontiers between Aden and the Ottoman dominions and between Muscat and the Ottoman dominions, among others, could be supplied to them from the archives of His Majesty's Embassy. The United States Embassy have been informed that a search was made among the archives of this Embassy, but without result.

2. In making this request the secretary of the United States Embassy explained that it was the State Department at Washington which desired a copy of the treaty, and had instructed the Embassy here to apply for a copy to the Turkish Government. The secretary went on to say that he had himself thought of addressing a similar request to His Majesty's Embassy in order to avoid delay in obtaining a copy of the treaty.

3. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington.

I have, &amp;c.

PERCY LORAINE.

[E 775/739/91]

No. 21.

*Foreign Office to India Office.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, February 24, 1934.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir John Simon to request that you will lay before Secretary Sir Samuel Hoare the following observations on India Office letter of the 1st February, regarding relations between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Sheikh of Kuwait.

2. Sir John Simon concurs in the view expressed in paragraph 2 of that letter that the question of declaring a protectorate over Kuwait should not for the present be further pursued.

3. With regard to the question of direct correspondence between the sheikh and King Ibn Saud, Sir John Simon agrees that the sheikh should first be sounded orally in the sense suggested in paragraph 3 of your letter. He would, however, suggest that thereafter the Political Resident should report further which of the alternative courses of action discussed in paragraph 5 of his despatch of the 25th October, 1933, he recommends, before adopting either, in order that His Majesty's Minister at Jedda may be given an opportunity of furnishing his observations. As at present advised, Sir John Simon is inclined to prefer the second alternative proposed by Colonel Fowle (viz., that all official correspondence between the sheikh and Ibn Saud should pass exclusively through the Political Resident or Political Agent and his Majesty's representative at Jedda), as emphasising more strongly the special position of His Majesty's Government in Kuwait, and placing a more effectual check upon Ibn Saud's attempts to strengthen his own position there to the detriment of that held by His Majesty's Government. This course would, in Sir John Simon's view, have the additional advantage that the influence of His Majesty's representative at Jedda could, when necessary, be more easily exerted upon the Saudi Government, if he were the actual channel of the sheikh's communications.

4. In any case, it appears that, were the first alternative adopted, it would not be sufficient simply to exercise a discreet control in Kuwait over direct correspondence between King Ibn Saud and the sheikh. For, although the sheikh's side of the correspondence would be seen by the Political Agent, there would be no indication of this fact on the document which reached Ibn Saud. If, therefore, the sheikh were to send Ibn Saud a letter which the Political Agent had not seen and which His Majesty's Government wished to repudiate on that ground, they might find some difficulty in establishing with King Ibn Saud the

fact that they were justified in doing so, since, so far as he could see, this letter would be no less authentic than others which he had exchanged with the sheikh, and which he had been tacitly led to consider perfectly in order. It would, therefore, in Sir John Simon's view, be necessary to add to those of the sheikh's letters which the Political Agent had seen and approved some indication of that fact. But such an arrangement would probably in the sheikh's eyes be as unwelcome a limitation on his official correspondence with Ibn Saud as the second alternative proposed by Lieutenant-Colonel Fowle.

5. It further appears to Sir John Simon that, since it is proposed in the first place, when sounding the sheikh orally, to suggest to him that all his official correspondence with Ibn Saud should be conducted through His Majesty's local representatives, to fall back later on the first alternative proposed by Lieutenant-Colonel Fowle would represent a weakening on the part of His Majesty's Government, which on general grounds would be better avoided.

6. A final decision in the matter must, however, evidently depend upon the report furnished by Lieutenant-Colonel Fowle after the preliminary oral approach to the sheikh.

7. As regards the obligations of His Majesty's Government in respect of the protection of Kuwait, Sir John Simon agrees with the views expressed in paragraphs 4 and 5 of your letter under reply.

8. He has also considered the proposal in paragraph 6 of that letter for the conclusion of a new and comprehensive treaty between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the sheikh, which should include *inter alia* the acceptance by His Majesty's Government of a general liability for the protection of the whole sheikhdom within the limits indicated in paragraph 10 of Colonel Fowle's despatch of the 25th October, referred to above. While agreeing that there would be advantage in such a treaty, Sir John Simon assumes that it is not proposed to undertake the negotiation of it immediately. *Prima facie* it seems inadvisable to raise a possibly controversial issue of such importance with the sheikh until the question of his relations with King Ibn Saud and that of the projected oil concession (which appears likely to indispose the sheikh, since he may lose financially by the elimination of competition between the Anglo-Persian Oil Company and the United States oil interests) have been disposed of.

9. As regards the possibility mentioned in paragraph 6 of your letter, that a formal treaty might be considered to place a heavier burden on His Majesty's Government than that which they at present bear in respect of Kuwait, without correspondingly binding the sheikh, I am to observe that, in accordance with the construction which is usually placed upon treaties with heads of States, any formal treaty concluded with the Sheikh of Kuwait would attach to Kuwait as a State, and would apply automatically to the sheikh's successors. The undertakings given by the two contracting parties to a treaty must certainly be construed as reciprocal. Sir John Simon notes, however, from statements made by the India Office representative at the meeting held at the Foreign Office on the 5th October to discuss this question, that it is considered that His Majesty's Government could and would remove a Sheikh of Kuwait for hopeless misgovernment. He presumes, therefore, that His Majesty's Government could in practice prevent the accession of a ruler who seemed unlikely to observe his treaty obligations towards them, or could, at any rate, remove a ruler who after his accession in fact refused to observe those obligations. If this be so, there appears no ground for fearing that a situation might arise in which His Majesty's Government would be faced with the alternatives either of acquiescing in a refusal by the sheikh to recognise his treaty obligations or of putting an end to their treaty relations with Kuwait.

10. Sir John Simon concurs in the view of Sir Samuel Hoare that it is unnecessary to refer this question to the Official Middle East Sub-Committee, but he assumes that copies of the relevant papers will be circulated later to the Departments represented thereupon.

I am, &amp;c.

G. W. RENDEL.



*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received February 27.)*

(No. 96.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, February 15, 1934.*

YOU are aware from correspondence beginning with my despatch No. 774 of the 11th December, 1933, and ending with my despatch No. 84 of the 8th February last that the Iraqi Government had responded favourably to my suggestions for a conference which was to have taken place in Bagdad on the 15th February with representatives of the Sheikh of Koweit, to devise practical means of preserving law and order in the territorial waters and on the land frontier between Iraq and Koweit. From a further despatch (No. 89 of the 12th February), which will reach you by this bag, you will observe that it has been found necessary to postpone this conference owing to the refusal of the Sheikh of Koweit to give his representatives the necessary authority to speak and act for him. In these circumstances, I consider it desirable briefly to describe the present position, if only to demonstrate that the task of protecting the sheikh's interests in Iraq, difficult at any time, is made no easier by his present disinclination to come out into the open and meet the Iraqi Government in frank discussion.

2. There can be no doubt that the Koweitis are inveterate and daring smugglers, both by sea and land, and have themselves largely to blame for the blockade which Ibn Saud maintains against them, and for the energetic preventive measures taken by the Persian and Iraqi Governments. So far as this country is concerned, the Director-General of Customs estimates that the annual loss to the Iraqi Treasury resulting from illegal Koweiti activities amounts to no less than £60,000. This figure is disputed by the political agent in Koweit, and I am not in a position to guarantee its accuracy. The control of the Iraqi customs is, however, in the hands of zealous, efficient and conscientious Englishmen, who, I am convinced, would not have taken the extreme measures against Koweiti smugglers that have resulted from time to time in loss of life had they not been satisfied as to their necessity.

3. In September 1932 the Iraqi Government put forward proposals designed to secure the co-operation of the Sheikh of Koweit in the prevention of smuggling. They suggested that before goods were shipped from Koweit to Iraq a permit for each shipment should be obtained. This permit, together with the shipping documents (manifests), should be authenticated by an Iraqi customs official in Koweit, who would be responsible for sending copies of the permit and the shipping documents to the Collector of Customs at Basra, and would inform him of the quantities of goods shipped so that some control could be exercised over the importers. If necessary, the political agent at Koweit could supervise and possibly undertake the duties of the Iraqi official mentioned above. As an alternative, the Iraqi Government suggested the establishment of a combined Iraqi-Koweiti Customs Department to levy customs duty on the basis of the Iraqi tariff, on the understanding that any excess duty over the Koweiti tariff rates in respect of goods consumed in Koweit would be refunded to the sheikh. They also proposed that, in order to watch the movements of boats and dhows, a small steamboat should be stationed at the mouth of the Shatt-el-Arab. These proposals were placed before the sheikh in March last, but his reply in May was non-committal, and Colonel Fowle was of the opinion that a round-table discussion seemed indicated. The Iraqi Government, who were approached, considered, however, that no good purpose would be served by such discussion until either the sheikh accepted their proposals in principle or put forward satisfactory ones of his own. Their view was that useful discussions could only be conducted on the basis of proposals, the principles of which had been already agreed upon between the two parties. No alternative suggestion had been forthcoming from the sheikh, when matters were brought to a head by the incident which formed the subject of your telegram No. 354 of the 9th December last.

4. Prior to the receipt of that telegram, I had repeatedly advised the Iraqi Government to be as amenable as possible in this matter, and, as you are aware from the notes enclosed in my despatch No. 774, I urged the Minister for Foreign Affairs to take a broad view, and to regard any discussions that might eventually take place as falling within his province rather than that of the Ministry of Finance. I took this line because, owing to the events of the recent past, I felt

that it was improbable that the customs experts on either side would regard the questions at issue in any but a parochial light, and that the discussions, far from producing any agreement, would develop into a fruitless wrangle over recent incidents, the blame for which cannot properly be allocated. I suspect, of course, that there are faults on both sides, and that, owing to uncertainty as to the limits of territorial waters, it is more than probable that the zeal of the Iraqi customs authorities has, at times, led them to take action outside the limits within which they can properly operate.

5. The agenda for the proposed conference to which Nuri Pasha finally agreed was as follows:—

- (a) Consideration of the proposals put forward by the Iraqi Government for co-operation between Koweit and Iraq for the prevention of smuggling.
- (b) Boundaries of territorial waters of Koweit and Iraq.
- (c) Consideration of the practical means of dealing with frontier incidents affecting the Koweitis and Iraqis.
- (d) Consideration of complaints by either party.

This agenda differs slightly from that which I telegraphed to Bushire on the 6th February, and I am explaining the discrepancy in a private letter to Colonel Fowle.

6. Nuri Pasha readily fell in with the suggestions (contained in my despatch No. 84 of the 8th February) which I put forward for the actual procedure to be followed at the conference, and which was devised to produce some sort of written agreement or understanding within the short space of time available. I was anxious that the conference should eschew as far as possible jejune discussion of the regrettable events that had taken place during the past year, and should devote itself to consideration of the means of placing the relations between the two parties on a more satisfactory footing for the future.

7. It was for this reason that I felt it necessary to enlarge the agenda so as to include items other than that relating purely to the dispute over smuggling. It is eminently desirable, for example, that not only should the boundaries of the territorial waters be finally agreed upon, but that each side should undertake to give the necessary instructions for its nationals and officials to be warned of the dangers attending illegal operations outside the recognised limits. As regards items (c) and (d), it is unfortunately only too apparent that, in the absence of some means of sifting the evidence in regard to incidents as and when they occur, it is impossible to arrive at the truth. My object in suggesting these items was, therefore, to secure that some machinery should be set up to enable an impartial finding to be given to both sides. I understand that the Iraqi Government had it in mind to suggest that the services of Colonel Ward should be utilised in this connexion, and that any reports which he submitted, after examination of the actual participants in, or witnesses of, incidents should be scrutinised by the British judge at Basra before being communicated to the two Governments. I would regard such an arrangement as being most equitable in the circumstances, and the sheikh would, in my opinion, be foolish to refuse it if, in fact, it is ever proposed to him.

8. Had the conference taken place on the basis of this agenda, the opportunity thus afforded for the sheikh to regularise his relations with the Iraqi Government would have been most favourable, since the intransigent elements on both sides would have been subordinated to what, I hope, would have been the larger view adopted by the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs.

9. The action of the sheikh in declining to give the necessary authority to his representatives to enter into frank discussion with the Iraqi Government on the lines suggested now places him, and will, I fear, continue to place him in an unfavourable light. Persistence in his attitude may endanger not only his own personal interests in Iraq, but also the general interests of his subjects. It should not be forgotten that the Iraqi Government are able, if they wish, to cut off the water supply of Koweit (see my despatch No. 41 of the 22nd January last). Thus, should they receive continued provocation and annoyance from Koweit, and should they decide to take extreme measures, the sheikh would be entirely at their mercy.

10. I may mention in this connexion that recent articles in the vernacular press have drawn attention to smuggling from Koweit, and have urged the Iraqi



Government to come to grips with the sheikh. Should this be the first move in a political campaign against him, I cannot help feeling that by his recent action he is playing directly into the hands of those who oppose him here. It seems to me, therefore, that it would be well if a serious warning could be given to the sheikh on the dangers of temporising in a matter which may prove of vital importance to him.

11. I gather from a telegram from the Political Resident at Bushire of the 26th January last (see my despatch No. 84 of the 8th February last) that it is at present the policy of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to emphasise the independence of the sheikh so far as concerns his relations with foreign Powers, and that, for this reason, Colonel Fowle considers it undesirable that he and the political agent at Koweit should act as the official representatives of the sheikh. I was under the impression that the foreign relations of the sheikh were still conducted through representatives of His Majesty's Government, and that a conference such as that which forms the subject of this despatch was eminently of the type where his representation should be undertaken by British officers. If this is not so, and if it is a fact that henceforth the sheikh is to conduct his own foreign relations, I think it advisable to point out that it has always been the desire of the Iraqi Government to treat directly with the sheikh personally, and that it has only been the mediating influence of His Majesty's representative in Iraq that has prevented them from dealing harshly with him during the past few years.

12. I trust, therefore, that the Political Resident at Bushire will be successful in persuading the sheikh that it is in his best interests to be authoritatively represented by responsible British officers in early conference with the Government of Iraq, and that Colonel Fowle will be fully supported by His Majesty's Government in his efforts. Failing this, I cannot but regard the future with misgiving.

13. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran and to the Honourable the Political Resident at Bushire.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

[E 1431/79/25]

No. 23.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received March 5.)*

(No. 41.)

Sir,

*Jedda, February 13, 1934.*

SINCE I wrote my despatch No. 33 of the 6th February there has been very little to report about the Saudi-Yemen situation, but it may be worth while to amplify the contents of my telegram No. 22 of the 12th February.

2. In paragraph 7 of my previous despatch I mentioned that the Amir Feisal had left Mecca in the first days of February, ostensibly on a hunting expedition. I have since heard that he went to a place called Hanakiya or Henakiya, which appears to be the place of that name shown in the maps some 60 to 80 miles north-east of Medina. Its importance lies in the fact that it is one of the permanent camel parks maintained by Ibn Saud as a definite part of his military organisation. The camels are kept in large numbers at small expense in order to have mounts ready for troops in case of need. I am told that there are three such parks in the Hejaz. I have heard of another near Hail, and there are doubtless similar parks elsewhere. The Amir Feisal had not returned to Mecca up to 11th February, when he was, according to the Minister of Finance, at another place not far from Hanakiya.

3. My Indian vice-consul, who returned on the 11th February from a short visit to Mecca, found people there depressed and full of rumours of war. It was suggested that the Amir Feisal might proceed from the Medina area direct to Jizan and that the King himself would leave for the front about the end of this month at the head of forces recruited from the "towns," who are less likely than the Ikhwan and the tribesmen to be called out on minor occasions, but who would appear to constitute an important element in the army when it is mobilised for large-scale operations. Both the prince and his father were represented as being now engaged in great efforts to inflame the ardour of the tribes and to overcome the reluctance

of some, e.g., it was said that portions of the Ajman and Mutayr had been brought to the Hejaz, but that the latter were unwilling to march. The Amir Feisal is said also to have been at great pains earlier to conciliate Ibn Rubaiyan, when the latter was at Taif some little time ago before leading his Ateyba to the south.

4. I need not multiply these reports and rumours. Khan Bahadur Ihsanullah's personal observations and his information from intimate personal friends leave no doubt that warlike preparations of every kind are on foot, including measures to increase the number of recruits, to extract money from non-combatants and to provide transport, &c. It does not follow that even now Ibn Saud wants war, but he is certainly acting as though he expected it, and he can hardly support indefinitely the strain entailed by his present preparations, whether it be the financial strain or the strain involved in keeping in the field large numbers of men, who might fight readily enough for the King, despite all that is said of his unpopularity, but who grow impatient if kept doing nothing.

5. I am aware that this picture is not unlike those that were painted at earlier stages of the quarrel. It is not so much the preparations themselves as their sustained intensity and the consideration that they cannot go on for ever that make me take a rather gloomy view. What has impressed me most in the last few days has been the emphasis with which the Minister of Finance told me, on the evening of the 11th February, that neither side expected the Abha Conference to succeed. The Minister had come down from Mecca to receive the information which you had authorised me to give him about the promoters of the new bank scheme. He was in a mood to please, but when I asked him for news of the south, he affirmed and reaffirmed that no good could come of the conference. I asked him how things were going in the Jebel Faifa area. He gave no definite further information, but said that it was precisely because of what was happening there that he took the view he did of the prospects of the conference. He laid the blame on the complete untrustworthiness of the Imam.

6. I do not wish to exaggerate the importance of what Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman said. He has not been in personal contact with the King and would not necessarily be in Ibn Saud's confidence, if he were determined to make peace at all costs. Nevertheless, the Minister of Finance knows a great deal and he knows how other minds are working. Last week I was inclined to think that the chances of war and peace were about equal. Since the return of the Indian vice-consul and my conversation with Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman, I have been inclined to increase the odds on war.

7. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador in Rome and to the Acting Chief Commissioner, Aden.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

[E 1593/739/91]

No. 24.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 12.)*

Sir,

*India Office, March 10, 1934.*

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to transmit to you, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a letter to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf respecting Koweit policy.

I am, &c.

S. F. STEWART.

Enclosure in No. 24.

*Secretary of State for India to the Political Resident, Persian Gulf.*

Sir,

*India Office, March 9, 1934.*

IN reply to your confidential despatch of the 25th October, on the subject of the relations between His Majesty's Government and the Sheikh of Koweit, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India to refer to the correspondence, copies of which have already been sent to you and to the Government of India.

[10923]

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2. In the light of the correspondence in question, the Secretary of State agrees that the question of declaring a protectorate over Koweit should not for the present be further pursued.

3. On the subject of direct correspondence between the sheikh and King Ibn Saud, the Secretary of State, in the light of the considerations adduced in paragraphs 3-6 of the Foreign Office letter of the 24th February, agrees with the course of action therein suggested by Sir John Simon. I am to request that you will be good enough to instruct Lieutenant-Colonel Dickson to approach the sheikh accordingly, and that you will in due course submit a further report when the result of Colonel Dickson's discussions with his Excellency is known and you are in a position to make recommendations as to the line to be adopted in pursuing this matter with the sheikh.

4. On the question of the obligations of His Majesty's Government in respect of the protection of Koweit, you will observe that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has expressed his agreement with the views contained in paragraphs 4 and 5 of India Office letter of the 1st February, 1934. The Foreign Office print, of which a copy is sent herewith, contains a supplementary historical note prepared in this Office on the question of the view taken in 1928-29 as to the liability of His Majesty's Government for the protection of Koweit against aggression from outside.

5. The Secretary of State would be glad in due course to receive your views on the proposal referred to in paragraph 6 of India Office letter of the 1st February for the conclusion of a new and comprehensive treaty between His Majesty's Government and the Sheikh of Koweit. The matter is not one of immediate urgency, and it may well be that, as suggested by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, there may be advantage in deferring any reference to it until further progress has been made in the disposal of the vexed question of the relations of the sheikh with King Ibn Saud and the questions of oil concessions for Koweit proper and the neutral zone between Koweit and Nejd.

6. The interdepartmental meeting of the 5th October recommended, *inter alia*, that the issue of the Saudi blockade of Koweit should be taken up with King Ibn Saud by His Majesty's Government on the basis of their obligation to protect the interests of Koweit. Disposal of this question has been deferred pending a decision on the matters discussed in the present letter, but steps are now being taken to deal with it as a matter of urgency.

7. Copies of this letter are being sent for information to the Government of India and to the Political Agent at Koweit.

I am, &c.  
J. C. WALTON.

[E 1635/73/25]

No. 25.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received March 13.)*

(No. 50.)

HIS Majesty's Minister at Jedda presents his compliments to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit to him copy of a note to the Government of India, dated the 20th February, 1934, respecting the Jedda water supply.

*Jedda, February 20, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 25.

*Sir A. Ryan to the Government of India.*

Sir,

*Jedda, February 20, 1934.*

IN your despatch of the 25th January you were good enough to inform me of the action taken in India to bring to the notice of intending pilgrims the medical advice recommended for observance during their stay in the Hejaz by the Indian medical officer attached to this Legation. I have the honour to inform you that one of the questions dealt with by Dr. Abdul Hamid, that of drinking-

water in Jedda, has recently reached a stage which makes it of special interest in this connexion.

2. Jedda has, previous to this year, been supplied with water from three main sources: (a) By the Government sea-water condenser; (b) by "saharij," or rain-water from reservoirs; (c) by well-water from wells close round Jedda. A series of attempts have recently been made to supplement these supplies by bringing into the town the water from wells at Waziriya, a place some 7 miles inland from which water was brought to the town in Turkish days. In August of last year the committee engaged in the work succeeded in making this water again reach the town through the old Turkish conduit.

3. The subject, although mentioned in the annual pilgrimage report and in Jedda monthly reports, has hitherto been considered more particularly from the economic point of view, and the principal recent despatch on it was Mr. Calvert's No. 355 of the 9th December to the Foreign Office, which was distributed to the Department of Overseas Trade only in addition. In that despatch Mr. Calvert stated that the prospects of a satisfactory flow of water appeared good, but that the committee was said to be lethargic and had to contend with the hostility of vested interests, notably that attributed to the powerful Minister of Finance, who looks to the sales of water from the present sea-water condensers as a small but certain source of revenue. The position as regards the water actually arriving in Jedda from Waziriya was less satisfactory. "They have, however," said Mr. Calvert, speaking of the committee, "done nothing towards the renewal of the conduit near the town; and it has now been established that the pipes in this portion, besides being rotten, are so full of the accumulated filth of ages that the water, which is reasonably pure at source, on arrival in the town contains almost every imaginable type of germ. Europeans here consequently eschew it and even the native population, which is usually influenced by considerations of price a great deal more than by those of hygiene, fights shy."

4. I am glad to be able to say that this disquieting verdict on the water arriving in Jedda can now be revised. I enclose a portion of a memorandum by Mr. G. W. Furlonge,<sup>(1)</sup> who has recently collaborated with the Indian medical officer in conducting an analysis of the water, summarising the results and their probable effect on pilgrims. This analysis showed that from a bacteriological point of view, the water is reasonably innocuous even when it reaches the central cistern from which it is distributed in the town after coming through the Turkish conduit. The latter is in two parts, a stretch of some 4 miles consisting of an underground conduit, partly cemented, and a further stretch of 3 miles consisting of earthenware pipes near the town. It is uncertain, on the other hand, whether a supply of really fresh water can be maintained, as the wells or pits sunk at Waziriya, where it seems to be possible to get water at almost any point in a largish area, appear to be fed by a seepage through the soil, and even though the first water may be fresh, the flow tends as it comes from a greater distance, to become more saline.

5. You will see that Mr. Furlonge's conclusions are reassuring, as regards the probable effect of the new supplies in regard to pilgrims. At the same time it is certainly not of such a kind as to do away with the necessity for encouraging them by all possible means to take the precaution of boiling all water they use, or alternatively mixing a few grains of potassium permanganate with each bucketful and leaving it to stand for some time, before use, as recommended by Dr. Abdul Hamid.

6. I will bring this subject up to date in my pilgrimage report for this year. As in the meantime it is of general interest, I am sending copies of this despatch and enclosure to the principal posts concerned with British and British-protected pilgrims, other than India, viz., Singapore, Jerusalem and Khartum. I am also sending copies to the Foreign Office and the Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &c.  
ANDREW RYAN.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.



[E 1637/79/25]

No. 26.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received March 13.)*

(No. 55.)

Sir,

*Jedda, February 28, 1934.*

IN my despatch No. 41 of the 13th February, I summed up my then most recent information regarding the Saudi-Yemen situation. Since that date there has been an extraordinary paucity of news or even rumours about what is happening. It can hardly be wondered at that, in all interested outside quarters, it should be thought that, to quote the *Times* of the 9th February, "prudent diplomacy" in an "Arabia Still Fortunate" has ended the crisis, and that nothing but the treaty-making remains. The Saudi Government themselves seem to have been anxious to foster this idea, witness the announcement on p. 13 of the *Times* of the 8th February, a variant of which was given about the same time to the Egyptian press.

2. The announcement just mentioned suggests either of two things. Ibn Saud may be so averse from war that he is determined to make the Abha Conference a success at all costs, or he may be expecting war but anxious to be able to represent it in due course as due to the Imam's intractability in a general negotiation which promised to be successful. At the moment it is impossible to know what has been passing at Abha. The Amir Feisal returned from the camel parks about the 15th February and came to Jedda on the 18th for four days. When I saw him on the 20th he professed to have had no news from Abha, since that of the arrival of the Yemeni delegation; although three clear days had elapsed, and there is no reason to believe that wireless communication has been interrupted. The Prince replied rather vaguely to a question about the position in the mountain area peopled by the Beni Malik, &c., but I understood him to say that he thought that the Yemeni forces had withdrawn.

3. Mr. Philby, who returned from Mecca three days after my conversation with the Amir, had heard nothing further about the negotiations, and he told me last evening that according to the Minister of Finance there was still no news. It seems hardly credible that the two Ministers most concerned should remain completely in the dark for over a week, but it is possible that the King is keeping the matter in his own hands at Riyadh, and it is conceivable, though less probable, that he has given full discretion to the heir apparent.

4. Meanwhile, the Saudi military preparations have continued. There appears to have been activity up Medina way about the time of and just after the Amir Feisal's excursion in that direction. One thousand one hundred men from the north are reported to have gone south by motor lorry at that time. Ford lorries bought through Mr. Philby's firm were being hurried off to Mecca as soon as they could be assembled, without undergoing any road test. Two of the motor barges sent to Jizan some time ago returned to Jedda on the 19th February and put to sea again two days later. The third was delayed on the return voyage, but reached Jedda later and left for Jizan on the 24th February with another party of some 200 troops.

5. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador in Rome and to His Majesty's Chief Commissioner at Aden.

I have, &amp;c.

ANDREW RYAN.

[E 1803/2/25]

No. 27.

*Sir E. Drummond to Sir John Simon.—(Received March 20.)*

(No. 241.)

Sir,

*Rome, March 17, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith a translation of a letter which I have received from Signor Suvich in reply to my letter of the 24th January, a copy of which was transmitted to you in my despatch No. 84 of the 26th January.

2. You will observe that the Italian Government, while appreciative of the action of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, express certain

apprehensions regarding the present situation and revert in effect to their proposal to hold what they apparently wish to be secret conversations in Rome. I still feel, as stated in my despatch No. 1022 of the 30th December last, that if His Majesty's Government found it possible to consent to these conversations, the effect produced here would be good.

I have, &amp;c.

ERIC DRUMMOND.

Enclosure in No. 27.

*M. Suvich to Sir E. Drummond.*

(Translation.)

My dear Ambassador,

*Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Rome.*

I THANK your Excellency for your courteous letter of the 24th January last, in which you were so good as to send me the latest information regarding the relations between Ibn Saud and the Imam, and the step which the British Minister at Jedda, on instructions from the British Government, had taken *vis-à-vis* the Saudi Government with a view to stopping the advance of the Saudi troops and preventing the outbreak of hostilities.

The Italian Government appreciates the action taken by the British Government in this respect; and I may, in my turn, assure your Excellency that we have continued, for our part, to exert all possible influence on the Imam with the same objects of pacification which inspired the action of the Government in London.

I hold that parallel action by the two Governments has indeed already contributed to diminish the tension in the relations between the two Arab kingdoms, and to induce the two Sovereigns to resume negotiations in order to arrive at an agreement. Your Excellency will in fact be aware that Ibn Saud and the Imam have decided to send their own delegations to a meeting which has been called at Abha. The head of the Saudi delegation is the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Fuad Hamza. The Imam has nominated as head of the Yemeni delegation Sayid Abdalla-el-Wazir, who left Sanaa on the 29th January last, and travelled first to Saada, where he conferred for some days with the Yemeni Crown Prince, Seif-el-Islam Ahmed, and afterwards went to Abha. The conference at Abha was preceded by an exchange of wireless telegrams between Ibn Saud and the Imam as a result of which it appeared that acceptable bases had been found to enable the conference to examine and solve the following questions:—

- (a) To decide the destiny of Asir and the form of its future administration, with the consequent delimitation of the frontiers between the two Arab States.
- (b) To settle the disputes regarding Nejran and the respective allegiance of its tribes.
- (c) To decide on the place where the Idrisi Emirs of Asir shall reside.
- (d) To conclude a treaty of friendship between the two countries.

The favourable news reported above should, however, in my opinion, be judged in the light of the rapid changes in the situation in the Arabian peninsula. A telegram dated the 11th February, 1934, from Sanaa stated that new difficulties had apparently arisen in regard to the outcome of the negotiations between Saudia and the Yemen. In fact, on the 10th February a report is said to have reached Sanaa that Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud had moved off at the head of his army ("si era spostato con i suoi armati" and was heading for Nejran, whereas, according to the agreements which had been arrived at, military movements should have been suspended, the Seif-el-Islam Ahmed remaining at Saada and Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud at Abha.

In these circumstances, while for our part we continue to follow with all attention the development of events and to influence the Imam in a sense favourable to a solution of the existing differences, we maintain an attitude of reserve in regard to the merits of such differences in conformity with the conclusions and the spirit of the conversations of Rome 1927.

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E 3



In the last paragraph of your letter of the 24th January, your Excellency set forth the motives which led the British Government to think that the moment was undesirable to proceed with the conversations proposed by the Italian Government. Your Excellency stated, *inter alia*, that one of the principal reasons which induced the Foreign Office to assume this attitude was that the points of view of the Italian and British Governments in regard to Asir and in regard to the rights of the Imam over that region were completely divergent.

I think it useful to observe in this connexion that in accordance with the statements contained in paragraph 2 of the *note verbale* of the Royal Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the 23rd December last, the Italian Government, conforming to the spirit of the conclusions of the conversations of Rome, holds that no particular attitude should be adopted ("di non dovere comunque assumere posizione") in regard to the differences which separate the two Arab States, and hence in regard to the question of Asir which is the principal bone of contention between them. It does not seem, therefore, possible to assert that the points of view of the Italian and British Governments in this connexion are divergent since the Italian Government, I repeat, holds that no particular attitude should be adopted.

With regard to the attitude adopted by His Britannic Majesty's Government, the Italian Government has already had occasion in the above-mentioned *note verbale*, to draw attention to the fact that the representatives of the British Government, during the conversations of Rome, declared that all territorial questions in regard to Asir and in general concerning the frontiers between the Hejaz and the Yemen were regarded as an internal Arabian question, which did not interest the British Government. In the same *note verbale* was expressed the confidence that His Britannic Majesty's Government would maintain their determination to avoid all formal and direct recognition of the sovereignty of Ibn Saud over Asir, and would also abstain from adopting any particular position in regard to the differences between the two Arabian States.

Further, the Anglo-Italian conversations proposed by the Italian Government were designed to have the same confidential character, as the conversations of Rome of 1927, and since they would not become known in Arabia they could not influence the course of the negotiations at present being conducted between the two Arabian States. They would thus serve a useful purpose in defining the points of view of the Italian and British Governments, who have always co-operated in a friendly spirit for the maintenance of peace in the Arabian peninsula.

SUVICH.

[E 1839/1206/91]

No. 28.

*Sir John Simon to Sir P. Loraine (Angora).*

(No. 125.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, March 22, 1934.*

IN your despatch No. 72 of the 13th February, your Excellency reported an enquiry made by the United States Embassy at Angora regarding the Anglo-Turkish Convention of the 29th July, 1913. This enquiry may prove of considerable importance, since there is reason to believe that the interest which it reveals on the part of the United States Government in the question of boundaries in Eastern Arabia is in all probability connected with the activities of United States oil interests in that area. As you are no doubt aware, in July 1933 the Standard Oil Company of California obtained from King Ibn Saud an oil concession covering the eastern part of his dominions. To the north the limits of this concession are co-terminous with the frontiers between Saudi Arabia, on the one hand, and Iraq and the independent Arab principality of Kuwait, on the other. These frontiers are now laid down in certain agreements referred to in paragraph 3 below, but the position in the south and south-east is, however, less simple.

2. On the 29th July, 1913, His Majesty's Government concluded with the Ottoman Government a convention defining the south-eastern boundary of Turkish Arabia from the coast of the Persian Gulf as far as the twentieth parallel

of latitude. A second convention concluded on the 9th March, 1914, continued the definition of this boundary between this point and the already delimited frontier between the Vilayet of the Yemen and the Aden Protectorate. Copies of the 1913 convention are enclosed in this despatch; the text of the 1914 convention will be found on pp. 42 and 43 of the 1933 edition of Volume XI of *Aitchison's Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, a copy of which is, I understand, in the library of His Majesty's Embassy. The first of these conventions was never ratified, but the boundary line laid down in article 11 thereof was definitely adopted by article 3 of the second convention, the ratifications of which were exchanged in London on the 3rd June, 1914. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have not had occasion to discuss with King Ibn Saud, since he acquired independent sovereignty over Nejd and the Hasa coast, the question of the precise boundary between his dominions and those of the Arab rulers in the Persian Gulf, who are in special treaty relations with His Majesty's Government, although Ibn Saud has, by article 6 of the Treaty of Jeddah of the 20th May, 1927, formally recognised those special relations and undertaken to maintain friendly relations with the rulers concerned. But the fact that certain territories on the Ottoman side of the 1913-14 line have now become independent States cannot be regarded, in the view of His Majesty's Government, as in any way affecting the status of the territories on the other side of that line, which were then, and still remain, under British influence. His Majesty's Government, therefore, still regard the 1913-14 line as forming the boundary between the Ottoman Succession State of Saudi Arabia and the territories of South-Eastern Arabia, with which they are in special relations.

3. Having regard to the presence of United States oil interests in this area, it is important that the United States Government should be under no misapprehension on this point. It is desirable, therefore, that they should receive as full an account as possible of the position of His Majesty's Government in this matter without delay, and should not be left to obtain possibly misleading information from the Turkish or Saudi Arabian Governments. I shall be glad, therefore, if you will arrange, as soon as possible, for the United States Embassy at Angora (a) to be furnished with a copy of the Anglo-Turkish Convention of the 29th July, 1913, and (b) to be shown the text of the Anglo-Turkish Convention of the 9th March, 1914 (*Aitchison*, Volume XI (1933), p. 42 onwards). It should be pointed out to the United States Embassy that, while the 1913 convention is unratified, the boundary laid down in article 11 is mentioned, adequately defined and definitely adopted in article 3 of the ratified convention of 1914, which in the view of His Majesty's Government remains operative. Further, since article 7 of the 1913 convention contains provisions regarding the frontier of Kuwait, it would be well that the attention of the United States Embassy should also be drawn to (c) the Kuwait-Nejd Boundary Convention of the 2nd December, 1922 (*Aitchison*, Volume XI (1933), pp. 213-4). Finally, since in connexion with the California Standard Oil Company's concession it may be of interest to the United States Government to have the exact documentary definition of the Iraq-Nejd frontier, the United States Embassy should also be shown the text of (d) Protocol No. 1 between Iraq and Nejd, signed at Uqair on the 2nd December, 1922 (*Aitchison*, Volume XI (1933), pp. 211-2).

4. The United States Embassy may be given copies of any of the above texts which they may require, and should be informed that *Aitchison's Treaties* is purchasable, if they or the State Department should require a copy.

5. There is, however, one point arising out of the question of this frontier which needs special attention. I enclose, for your own confidential information and guidance, copies of telegraphic correspondence between the India Office and the Government of India from which you will see that, although His Majesty's Government are satisfied as to the legal validity of the 1913-14 frontier as marking the eastern boundary on Ibn Saud's dominions, some difficulty may possibly arise in maintaining that the territory immediately to the east of that line still forms part of the dominions of the Sheikh of Qatar. This point is receiving further consideration; and, meanwhile, should you find it necessary to give the United States Embassy any oral explanations on the matter, you should, notwithstanding the fact that the 1914 convention specifically describes the blue line as dividing Nejd from "the territory of Qatar," avoid referring to the territory to the east of the blue line as specifically forming part of the State of Qatar itself, but refer to it merely as being under British influence.

[10923]

E 4



6. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington, and of the correspondence to His Majesty's Minister at Jedda.

I am, &c.

JOHN SIMON.

[E 1920/22/91]

No. 29.

*Resident, Aden, to Secretary of State for the Colonies.—(Communicated to Foreign Office; Received March 26.)*

(No. 50. Secret.)

Sir,

*The Residency, Aden, February 28, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to submit my report on my mission to the Imam of the Yemen.

#### I.—Preliminary.

2. The composition of the mission was as follows:—

Lieutenant-Colonel B. R. Reilly, C.I.E., O.B.E. (His Majesty's Commissioner and Plenipotentiary).

Mr. R. S. Champion, O.B.E. (Political Secretary).

Lieutenant the Hon. R. A. B. Hamilton (Aide-de-Camp and Transport Officer).

Khulussi Effendi Khairi (Interpreter).

Mr. C. J. Vyas (Medical Officer).

Mr. Saleh Jafar (Political Assistant).

Mulazim-al-Khader Mohsin Aulaqi (Assistant Transport Officer).

Two wireless operators and two orderlies from the Aden Protectorate Levies.

3. The mission, with the exception of Mr. Champion, left Aden in H.M.S. *Hastings* on the 15th December, 1933, and arrived at Hodeidah on the following day. Mr. Champion was detained at Aden by illness, but was able, fortunately, to leave a week later, travelling by air to Kamaran, and thence by road to Hodeidah and Sana. On landing at Hodeidah we were received by Seif-al-Islam Abdullah, a son of the Imam and Governor of Hodeidah, and we proceeded next day by cars to Mabbar, travelling by the old Hodeidah-Sana route as far as Ubal and thence by the new motor road constructed by the Imam about a year ago. This road is a remarkable engineering achievement, and climbs the steep and imposing Yemen mountains to a height of 7,700 feet at Ras-al-Masna, from which point it descends into the central Yemen plateau and joins the Sana-Dhamar-Yerim road at Mabbar.

4. We spent the night at Mabbar, where we were hospitably entertained by the Amil, Qadhi Ahmed-al-Jiraf, and we reached Sana the following day (the 18th December) at about noon. We were accompanied on the whole journey from Hodeidah to Sana by Qadhi Ali-al-Amri, a brother of the Imam's Prime Minister.

5. On our arrival at Sana we were conducted through streets lined by troops to our residence, a large Turkish house called "Sanaia," where we were welcomed by the Prime Minister, Qadhi Abdullah-al-Amri, and the Foreign Minister, Qadhi Muhammad Ragheb Bey, a Turkish gentleman, whom I had first met at Aden about thirteen years previously in circumstances mentioned in paragraph 6 of my despatch to you, No. 208, dated the 21st October, 1931.

6. Next day, accompanied by Lieutenant Hamilton, I paid a formal call on the Imam, who gave us a very cordial reception. I presented my credentials, which the Imam rose to receive, standing as a sign of respect to His Majesty the King whose signature they bore. After some conversation the Imam stated that he intended to depute Qadhi Muhammad Ragheb Bey to conduct the negotiations with me, at the same time declaring that he relied on me to look after his interests as well as those of my own Government.

#### II.—The Treaty Terms.

7. The negotiations were commenced on the following day. As we were at the beginning of the month of Ramadan, when Sana remains awake at night

and sleeps in the mornings, it was arranged that our meetings should take place in the afternoons. They usually lasted about two hours. There were fifteen formal meetings, of which all were with the Imam's Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Qadhi Muhammad Ragheb Bey, with the exception of one, to which I shall refer later, with the Prime Minister, Qadhi Abdullah-al-Amri. Throughout the negotiations all points of importance were referred by Qadhi Muhammad Ragheb Bey to the Imam for instructions.

8. At the first meeting I recapitulated briefly the circumstances in which I had been entrusted with my mission, and reminded the Qadhi of the conditions laid down in the "admonitory document," the fulfilment of which by the Imam was essential to the conclusion of a treaty. I said that I hoped above all that my visit would have the effect of replacing the mutual suspicions which had so long existed by mutual confidence, and that my arrival in anticipation of the removal of trade restrictions was an indication of the confidence that I, on my part, was prepared to place in the Imam's promises. The Qadhi assured me that this confidence would be fully justified.

9. It was agreed that the treaty should be dealt with article by article. The preamble and articles 2, 4 and 6 presented no difficulty as their wording was already agreed. Our discussion therefore commenced with article 1.

10. The point at issue in this article was the Imam's wish to insert the words "and his Government" after both "His Majesty the King of Great Britain, &c." and "His Majesty the King of the Yemen," which His Majesty's Government were unwilling to accept for the reasons stated in the memorandum sent to me with your secret despatch of the 20th November, 1933. I found that the Imam's strong desire for the addition of these words was based mainly on his impression that no treaty made by Great Britain is really binding unless it is approved by Parliament, and on a confusion in his mind between His Majesty's Ministers and the Parliament to which Ministers are responsible. Although his views were not expressed precisely in these words, it is evident that he felt that, to make himself secure, he must insist on the treaty being binding on the parliamentary Government of Great Britain, as well as on its Sovereign, and the Qadhi instanced cases in which he believed that Parliament had reversed or altered British foreign policy. I explained that under the British Constitution the treaty-making power is vested solely in the Crown; that it is open to Parliament to censure Ministers for giving bad advice to the Crown, but that Parliament cannot repudiate a treaty which the Crown has concluded. I also explained that the suggestion of a distinction in this respect between the King and his Government might produce difficulties with other States with which Great Britain had concluded treaties in the name of the King alone. The Qadhi eventually accepted my arguments, but it became clear that the Imam's doubts had still not been completely set at rest, and I therefore offered to send him, after the signature of the treaty, the note which your memorandum authorises me to address to him on this subject. This satisfied the Imam with regard to British constitutional practice, but not with regard to his own. As an elected and not an hereditary ruler, he felt that the treaty must clearly cover his State as well as himself, and he desired an addition to the note to make this clear, still pressing for a reference to his Government. This I declined, and the Qadhi then asked whether I could accept an addition of the words "and his kingdom" after "His Majesty the King of the Yemen, the Imam," which he said would content the Imam. This proposal did not appear to me to be open to the same objections as his original one, and the addition of these words did not, in my opinion, make any material difference to the meaning of the article. I therefore decided to agree to their insertion.

11. In article 3 the Imam wished to omit the words "of the territories of His Majesty the King of the Yemen" after "southern frontier." I pointed out that "southern frontier" alone was too vague an expression, and the Qadhi admitted that it was so. He agreed to add the words "of the Yemen," but said that the Imam objected to the fuller phrase desired by His Majesty's Government for reasons similar to those which he had adduced regarding his own position in connexion with article 1. He said that His Majesty's Government's wording suggested his personal possession of the country, and was inappropriate to an elected and not hereditary ruler, and therefore might be prejudicial to him. His argument was not very convincing, but the words "southern frontier of the Yemen" had always appeared to be adequate, provided that it was clear from



the context that the term "Yemen" was used in its political and not in its wider geographical sense. I had expressed this view in paragraph 2 (a) of my despatch No. 208, dated the 21st October, 1931, and the three references to the frontier in the second part of article 3 strengthened my opinion that it was obvious that a political and not a geographical boundary was intended. In view, however, of the precise instructions contained in your memorandum, I felt it necessary to ask by telegram for your approval. On receiving it, I accepted the words "of the Yemen." I was already authorised to agree to the second alteration desired by the Imam in article 3, namely, the omission of the words "by persons under their protection," and with these amendments the article was accepted by both sides.

12. Article 5 proved, rather surprisingly, to be the most contentious in the treaty. I was satisfied that the omission of the words "from the date of the coming into force of the present treaty" had no objectionable significance, and I therefore agreed to it in accordance with the instructions in your memorandum, and also to the phrase "each of the high contracting parties" instead of "one high contracting party." With regard to the Imam's insertion of "and judgments" after "local laws," I found that he really meant not judgments, but judicial and administrative orders and regulations in general. The word "decrees" appeared to be a comprehensive definition of what was intended, and it was agreed that it should be substituted for "judgments," it being obvious that the subjects of either party must, when resident in the country of the other, submit to local administrative orders and regulations as well as to local laws and judicial orders.

13. Considerable discussion followed regarding the question of national, as distinct from most-favoured-nation treatment. The question was complicated by the fact that article 5 (1) refers only to subjects of each of the parties who wish to trade in the territories of the other. Most-favoured-nation treatment is appropriate in matters of trade, but the Qadhi urged that national treatment would not be so, inasmuch as no foreigner in the Yemen is at present allowed freedom in trade equal to that given to natives of the country. It is, for instance, well known that foreigners are not permitted to acquire immovable property, and the Yemen must make a good deal more progress before this restriction is likely to be removed. I said that I desired national treatment for British subjects as regards their position before the law, and not necessarily as regards trade. The Qadhi argued that this was already secured by the stipulation that they would be amenable to the local laws, which, he said, obviously implied that they would enjoy the protection of these laws, and would have the same legal rights as well as the same legal obligations as the local people. Attempts were made to recast the clause in order to make this point clearer, and also to distinguish between traders and residents or visitors; but I eventually came to the conclusion that it would be better to let the clause stand as it was. There appears to me to be force in the contention that legal equality is clearly implied, and I consider that the clause as accepted is satisfactory.

14. Clauses (2) and (3) of article 5 gave a large amount of trouble. I discovered that this was due to the fact that undertakings similar to those in clause (2) have been included in treaties which the Imam has contracted or is negotiating with other European Powers; and as the clause gives most-favoured-nation treatment, he is extremely averse to admitting in one treaty any words or explanations that do not appear in the others, fearing that to do so may expose him to demands for modifications by the other countries concerned. It is for this reason that he disliked the addition of definitions in clause (3) and especially the definition of "vessels" which appeared to widen the meaning of vessels in clause (2), the context of which clearly in his opinion confined it to merchant vessels. He objected to the reference to passengers in clause (2) for the same reason, and also because he feared that undesirable non-British foreigners might obtain advantages from it by coming to the Yemen in British ships.

15. I said that I could not agree to the omission either of clause (3), or of the reference to passengers in clause (2), and I explained His Majesty's Government's point of view with regard to the latter. I also insisted on the phrase "in the ports of the territories of the other," instead of the words "in the ports of the other" desired by the Imam in clause (2). The Qadhi, after further references to the Imam, gave way on these points, and clauses (2) and (3) were accepted. To meet the Qadhi's wishes I agreed to some alterations in their phrasing. The slight change in the wording of clause (2) makes no difference in its sense. In

clause (3) (b) "persons under His Majesty's protection" has been changed to "the inhabitants of countries under His Majesty's protection," because the Imam apprehended that under the former phrase His Majesty's Government might take particular individuals in the Yemen under their protection, a proceeding which I assured the Qadhi was certainly not intended on our part.

In this clause the reference to companies also gave rise to much discussion, the Imam being very suspicious of the operations of foreign companies in his territory; but I insisted on its inclusion. The Qadhi on this occasion, as on some others, gave way on the point at issue, but asked for a slight change in the phraseology which did not alter the sense, and which I accepted. Clause (3) (c) contained the vexed question of the meaning of "vessels" in clause (2). On this point I was personally in agreement with the Qadhi that it appeared from the context of clause (2)—that is, from the mention of cargoes and passengers—that the vessels referred to were merchant ships. He argued that this was so clear that it had been unnecessary to stress the point in the Imam's treaties with other European Powers, but that the proposed definition in clause (3) (c) introduced an ambiguity which was absent from the other treaties in which no definitions were included. After a telegraphic reference to you I yielded this point, on which I myself was inclined to agree with the Qadhi's view, and the word "merchant" has been inserted before "vessels."

16. Article 7 raised the question of language. Neither the Imam himself nor any of his Ministers or officials has any knowledge of English, and from the outset I have felt certain that the Imam would never consent (except possibly under force) to bind himself by a treaty drawn up in a foreign language incomprehensible to himself and to his advisers. His cautious and very suspicious nature makes it impossible for him to do so, and he is not in the least influenced by the argument that other Arab rulers have taken this risk. My proposal that the English and Arabic texts should have equal force was met by the objection that both could not be decisive if it ever appeared that there was a difference in their meanings. Under the authority of paragraph 12 of your secret despatch of the 14th April, 1932, and of your telegram of the 14th December, 1933, I eventually made the concession which I had throughout regarded as inevitable, and agreed that the Arabic text should prevail in case of doubt.

17. No reference was made on either side to the "Secret Appendix," which the Imam had suggested in his letter dated the 20th June, 1933, and which he had already been told in writing was wholly unacceptable to His Majesty's Government. I do not think that he ever seriously supposed that this remarkable proposal had any chance of success. He has reconciled himself to the omission of any reference in the treaty to his claim to islands in the Red Sea, but Qadhi Muhammad Ragheb Bey raised the question of this claim in conversation. I followed the instructions on this subject contained in paragraph 5 of your despatch, dated the 20th November, 1933, and refused to discuss the merits of the case, but said that I should be willing, after the signature of the treaty, to receive and to report to His Majesty's Government any observations that the Imam might wish to make; but that I could give no indication of the attitude of His Majesty's Government in this matter. This procedure was accepted, and at my farewell visit to the Imam after the treaty had been signed, he gave me a brief statement of his claim to the islands in a formal note, the receipt of which I acknowledged in writing, but without comment.

18. These discussions with Qadhi Muhammad Ragheb Bey disposed of the terms of the treaty, all of which were finally agreed at our eleventh meeting on the 8th January. The English and Arabic texts were compared with great care by Mr. Champion and Khulusi Effendi Khairi in consultation with Qadhi Muhammad Ragheb Bey and myself, and I am confident that all possibility of error has been eliminated.

### III.—The Admonitory Document.

19. We had now reached the crucial stage of the negotiations, namely, the Imam's compliance with the "admonitory document." Qadhi Muhammad Ragheb Bey had assured me that there would be no difficulty about this, but there nevertheless was some delay caused by a controversy regarding the Subeihi and Beihan borders. Mr. Champion had on the 4th January given the Qadhi detailed lists showing the names of the villages and sub-sections in the Audhali country



and the villages in the Sanah area, the evacuation of which was required. He also gave him the names of the Beihani and Audhali prisoners and hostages who were to be released, and a map showing approximately the line which must be established as the *status quo* before the signature of the treaty.

20. The Qadhi raised no difficulties about the Audhali and Sanah evacuations, the release of prisoners and hostages and the removal of trade restrictions. But on the 9th January he said that the Imam's advisers had represented that the effect of the British ultimatum of October 1933 had been to advance the protectorate line in the Western Subeihi area to include a number of districts which had never previously been in the British sphere. I was able to show the Qadhi on a map that these districts were on the British side of the old Anglo-Turkish boundary. I admitted that there had been several Yemeni tax-collecting incursions into them, but I said that the Aden Residency had protested whenever these had come to its knowledge, and that it had never admitted the right of the Yemenis to come south of the old Anglo-Turkish frontier in this area. The British demand made in October 1933 was therefore not a new claim, but one from which His Majesty's Government had never at any time receded. The Qadhi replied that the Imam accepted the line of the Anglo-Turkish boundary on this part of the frontier, and he professed to be convinced by the evidence of the map which I had shown him.

21. The Qadhi then raised a question regarding the Yemeni-Beihan frontier. He argued that the Masabis have no connexion with Beihan and no treaty with His Majesty's Government, and that it is therefore wrong to include them in the Aden Protectorate. He maintained that the Masabis are on bad terms with the Shereef of Beihan and are naturally attached to the Qaifa tribe in the district of Rada in the Yemen, and that the Imam's troops were wrongly excluded from their territory by British threats of air action in 1931. I replied that His Majesty's Government's treaty with the Shereef of Beihan accords protection to him and to his dependents, and that this expression has always been regarded as including the Masabis, most of whose villages are situated in the Beihan valley in such close proximity to the Shereef's villages that a division of control is impracticable. I denied that the Masabi Sheikh or the majority of his tribe are hostile to the Shereef (though I admitted that one of the minor chiefs was opposed to him), and I insisted that, in any case, I was unable to reopen the question of the frontier in this area, and that the position established in 1931 must be maintained without change. I refused to accept a further suggestion that the Masabi country should be treated as neutral territory.

22. I hoped that my explanations had disposed of the Subeihi and Masabi questions, but, at an interview two days later, the Qadhi informed me that the Imam was still dissatisfied regarding them, that his advisers had convinced him that His Majesty's Government were making new and unjustifiable claims in the Subeihi country, and that he still pressed his views regarding the Masabi tribe. The Qadhi suggested that Mr. Champion and a representative of the Imam should go immediately to study the Subeihi boundary on the spot. I rejected this proposal, and said that I had given my definite assurance that His Majesty's Government were claiming nothing more than the old Anglo-Turkish line in the Subeihi country, and that I expected my word to be believed. I also refused to discuss any modification of the Beihan boundary. I told the Qadhi that if the Imam persisted in raising these new issues all our work on the treaty would be frustrated; and I warned him that if my present mission failed, the negotiations would be at an end, and His Majesty's Government would have to turn to other means of settling outstanding questions. I said that every effort ought to be made to prevent such an alternative, and that His Majesty's Government were most sincerely desirous of a friendly agreement, but that the time had come for the Imam to decide whether he would honour his promise to fulfil the conditions of the admonitory document. I begged the Qadhi to convince the Imam of the seriousness of the situation in the event of further delay, and asked him to arrange an interview between the Imam and myself if he were unable to do so. The Qadhi asked me to leave the matter to him, and I agreed to await the result of his efforts.

23. During this period the Imam was holding nightly conferences with his civil and military advisers, and I believe that information and maps supplied to him by the Officer Commanding at Taiz at last convinced him that the British claim in the western Subeihi area was justified. He, however, made a final

effort to obtain, or at least to neutralise, the Masabi country. With this object he sent his Prime Minister, Qadhi Abdullah-al-Amri, to see me on the 13th January. This new envoy, an Arab belonging to a distinguished Sana family, and a man of very agreeable presence and manners, asked me for a reconsideration of the Masabi question, or for a reference to London on the subject, and he also suggested that the British demand for the evacuation of Sanah might be dropped. He appeared to me to realise from the outset that he had little or no prospect of succeeding in these requests, but (in accordance, no doubt, with his instructions), he pressed them on me for over an hour. I declined politely but steadily to entertain them in any form, and Qadhi Abdullah eventually accepted my refusal, and said that the conduct of the negotiations would now be resumed by Qadhi Muhammad Ragheb Bey.

24. The latter accordingly came to see me on the 15th January, and informed me that the Imam had decided to comply with the terms of the admonitory document without further delay, and was issuing immediate orders for the evacuation of the Audhali country and the Sanah area, for the release of the prisoners and hostages, and for the removal of his embargo on overland trade with the Aden Protectorate. The territories to be surrendered were defined precisely by two lists—one of sixty-four villages in the Audhali country and the other of eight villages in the Sanah area—which had been carefully prepared beforehand by Mr. Champion. The list of Audhali villages was necessarily based on evidence supplied by the Audhali Sultan, and it was therefore possible that it might err in favour of the Audhalis. I nevertheless decided to insist on it in its entirety, with the reservation that it might subsequently be corrected after closer enquiry on the spot, which was impossible as long as the Zeidis remained in occupation. On the other hand, the Audhali Sultan had been warned that no villages would be claimed other than those named in the list, and in my demands to the Imam I adhered to the principle of the whole list and nothing but the list. The Qadhi stated that the evacuations and other measures would commence on the 18th January.

25. The embargo on overland trade between the Yemen and the Aden Protectorate was removed punctually on that date, and the Sanah district was evacuated immediately. The Imam's orders for the release of prisoners and hostages and for the evacuation of the Audhali country were not obeyed with equal promptitude, and four weeks elapsed before the treaty could be signed.

26. This unfortunate delay was due mainly to the obstructive attitude of the Imam's Amil at Beidha, whose duty it was to arrange the Yemeni withdrawal from the Audhali country, and to a controversy about certain villages named in the list of places to be liberated. The Amil of Beidha maintained that a number of these, and particularly those in the Shurjan and Am Hajariya districts, did not belong to the Audhali tribe, and his contention was supported at Sana by Seyyid Abdullah-al-Wazir, a former Governor of the Dhamar Province, which included Beidha and the Upper Audhali country.

27. Seyyid Abdullah had come to Sana to take charge of the Imam's mission to negotiate with Saudi representatives at Abha, and on the 26th January Qadhi Abdullah-al-Amri brought him to call on me. He told me that he knew the country in question intimately, and that there was no doubt that the Shurjan and Am Hajariya districts were not Audhali, and he argued that Qadhi Muhammad Ragheb Bey had agreed to their evacuation through ignorance of the locality. I declined at this stage of the negotiations to modify my demands for evacuation, which the Imam had already accepted; but I informed Qadhi Abdullah-al-Amri that I should be willing, on my return to Aden, to send an officer to the country in dispute to make a local investigation in collaboration with a Yemeni representative; and that, if it were found that any of the places evacuated were beyond the limits of the Audhali tribe, they would be restored. The Imam, to whom this conversation was reported, sent me an assurance that he intended to abide by his promises to withdraw from all the places named in the list which had been given to him, and said that he was willing to leave the question of the restoration of Shurjan and Am Hajariya to the result of my enquiries, in which he did not wish to participate.

28. The mission was throughout in wireless communication with the Acting Resident at Aden, by whom I was informed of the progress of the Zeidi evacuation. Qadhi Muhammad Ragheb Bey was kept in touch with the course of events by a daily interchange of visits, usually paid by Mr. Champion on him.



Captain B. W. Seager was sent from Aden to the Audhali country on the 17th January to superintend the reoccupation of the surrendered territory by the Audhalis, and to ensure that it was effected without friction or conflict with the retiring Yemenis. The first villages on the high plateau which constitutes the Upper Audhali country were handed over by the Amil of Beidha to Captain Seager on the 27th January, and the evacuation of all the villages named in the list referred to in paragraph 24 was completed by the 8th February. All the Audhali hostages had also been released and handed over to Captain Seager by this date. Some doubt continued as to whether the Beihan prisoners had also actually been released. They had been confined at Dhamar, from which place the direct road to their homes did not pass through Captain Seager's neighbourhood, and it was not until the 10th February that I could satisfy myself of their liberation.

#### IV.—Conclusion of the Treaty.

29. All the conditions of the admonitory document having now been fulfilled, I signed the treaty with Qadhi Muhammad Ragheb Bey on the morning of the 11th February, and at the same time I handed to him the note referred to in paragraph 10 of my report.

30. I and the other members of the mission paid our farewell visit to the Imam on the same day. He received us with great cordiality, and both he and his Ministers were obviously greatly pleased by the happy issue of the negotiations. I read a short speech to His Majesty, a copy of which is attached to my report,<sup>(1)</sup> and he gave me a telegram and a letter, both addressed to His Majesty the King. I despatched the former immediately, and I am forwarding the latter to you under cover of a separate despatch.

31. The mission left Sana on the afternoon of the 12th February. A ceremony similar to that on our arrival was observed, and the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister and other leading State officials came to our house to bid us farewell and to see us off. After a halt for a night at Mabar, we reached Hodeidah on the evening of the 13th February. We embarked on H.M.S. *Penzance* on the following morning, and I there received a telegram from His Majesty the King to the Imam, a translation of which was immediately telegraphed to Sana.

32. After calls at Kamaran and Perim, we arrived at Aden on the morning of the 17th February. I landed officially, and was greatly impressed by the enthusiastic welcome accorded to the mission by the people of Aden, who are delighted by the removal of the restrictions on their overland trade and by the conclusion of a treaty of friendship with the Yemen.

#### V.—Subsidiary Questions.

33. A number of subsidiary questions came under discussion or consideration during the negotiations. Of these, the principal were the future of Rubiatein, the interchange of British and Yemeni representatives, the slave trade, landing grounds in Yemeni territory and Saudi-Yemeni relations.

34. The question of Rubiatein was discussed in my despatch No. 253 dated the 16th December, 1931, and in your telegraphic reply dated the 19th January, 1932, you agreed that it should not be regarded as vital. I accordingly raised it, but did not press it. In dealing with the boundary in his interview with Qadhi Muhammad Ragheb Bey on the 4th January (to which I have referred in paragraph 19), Mr. Champion made it clear that His Majesty's Government reserve their right to claim Rubiatein if they wish to do so when the frontier is finally agreed in accordance with the third article of the treaty. It was, however, obvious that an immediate demand for this district, which has now been in Yemeni occupation for many years, could not be enforced without endangering the success of the negotiations. Rubiatein has undoubtedly for long been a dependency of the Upper Yafai Sultans, but its people are not Yafais, and their destiny is therefore not a matter of interest to the Upper Yafai tribes as a whole, but only to one of their chiefs, the titular Sultan, who desires the revenue which his predecessors drew from this district in former days. Last year the Sultan's father made a rash and unsuccessful raid into the country in direct disobedience

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

of the instructions of the Aden Residency, and this unauthorised and embarrassing action made me the less inclined to risk the success of my mission in the immediate prosecution of his claim. The Sultan's notorious inability to exercise effective control over his own tribe, or even over his own section of it, added to my reluctance to insist on the restoration of an extra-tribal dependency to his rule. In these circumstances I decided to content myself with Mr. Champion's reservation on this subject. Although the question of Beidha was not stressed in the same manner as that of Rubiatein, I made it clear on more than one occasion that His Majesty's Government are not precluded by the terms of the present treaty from claiming it and all territory up to the old Anglo-Turkish line in the course of the final settlement.

35. In your secret despatch dated the 14th April, 1932, I was instructed to urge the appointment of a permanent British representative at Sana after the conclusion of the treaty. The Imam raised objections to this proposal in a letter dated the 20th June, 1933, a translation of which was sent to you in the Acting Resident's despatch No. 164 dated the 12th July, 1933. As the point was not further pressed, either to the Acting Resident or in your latest instructions to me, I concluded that His Majesty's Government do not attach any urgent importance to it. In my opinion, after further consideration, there are certain disadvantages which appear to me to outweigh the advantages of the proposal. These are:—

- (1) A permanent representative at Sana would not have work enough to occupy his time.
- (2) The appointment of a British representative would almost certainly be followed by a demand for the appointment of an Italian representative, and possibly by similar demands from other Governments. These foreign representatives would have little to do except to watch each other's supposed activities and to compete for influence with the Imam.
- (3) The Imam, having been recognised as a King, would in all likelihood expect the representative to have the same status as the British representative accredited to his neighbour and rival, King Ibn Saud, that is, the rank of a Minister, which I anticipate His Majesty's Government would not be prepared to accord to him. The Italian Government, on the other hand, might have no such objection, if they felt that the establishment of a Legation in the Yemen would strengthen their position in Arabia.
- (4) The appointment of a British representative at Sana might be balanced by that of a Yemeni representative at Aden. My experience of the presence of an envoy from the Imam at Aden from 1921 to 1924 does not encourage me to welcome this prospect. He gained an influence and authority over the considerable Zeidi element in the population of Aden which was most undesirable, and his intrigues with protectorate chiefs led to his dismissal.

36. My speculations in this respect may be mistaken, but the contingencies that I have mentioned appear to me to be both possible and likely to be embarrassing. I was therefore neither surprised nor seriously disappointed when Qadhi Muhammad Ragheb Bey deprecated my proposal that a permanent British representative should be sent to Sana after the conclusion of the treaty. He based the Imam's objections mainly on the certainty that the Italian Government would immediately make a similar demand with which he would be most reluctant to comply, but which he would be unable to refuse. He suggested as an alternative that a British official representative should go to Sana from time to time as occasion demanded, and this solution appears to me to be both sensible and sufficient for the present. Qadhi Muhammad Ragheb Bey realised that disputes and friction are bound to occur from time to time between local tribes on the frontier, and that undesirable incidents may result if these are not adjusted promptly by the two controlling Governments acting, if possible, in co-operation. For this purpose he proposed to recommend to the Imam the appointment of a special frontier officer, whose duty it would be to visit the border districts and to ensure that causes of trouble were disposed of quickly and in amicable agreement with the British authorities. He asked me for my opinion of this plan, and I told him that it appeared to me to be an admirable one. I added that I should



like to be able to employ an officer in a corresponding manner on our side of the frontier, and that I should submit this suggestion to my Government. I have stated my reasons against the appointment of a permanent representative at Sana. In my opinion it would be preferable to have an officer posted at Aden under the control of the Resident, who would be available for despatch to the protectorate frontier at any point at which there was a danger of local trouble which might endanger the harmony of Anglo-Yemeni relations, and who could be sent to Sana at any time that personal discussion with the Yemeni Government appeared to be desirable. This officer should be in addition to the two political officers appointed at Aden for work in the Aden Protectorate, whose duties (which I outlined in my despatch No. 266 dated the 9th November, 1933) would not leave them time for visits to the Yemen. I intend to address you on this subject in a separate despatch, in which I shall submit my proposal in more detail.

37. On the 24th January I received telegraphic instructions from you to endeavour to obtain the insertion in the treaty of the slave trade clause contained in the treaty which Sir Gilbert Clayton endeavoured to negotiate with the Imam in 1926, or, alternatively, an interchange of notes to the same effect. By this time the terms of the treaty were practically agreed, and I was reluctant to bring forward new demands at so late a stage. I therefore broached this request without pressing it very strongly, which seemed to me at this point to be the best way of securing the Imam's willing acceptance. Qadhi Muhammad Ragheb Bey denied that the Imam had definitely agreed to the clause in the Clayton draft: he said that it had at that time been reserved for further consideration when the main terms of the treaty had been agreed, and that the Imam would now prefer to give the assurance desired by His Majesty's Government in the form of an exchange of notes. I consented to this proposal, and translations of my note to the Imam and of his reply are attached to my report.

38. The officer commanding the British forces at Aden had, before my departure, suggested the desirability of asking the Imam to allow a landing ground for aeroplanes to be made in his territory, preferably near Sana. I thought that the Imam would be more likely to agree to one at or near Hodeidah, and I made this suggestion. It was met by the usual plea that permission to the British to make a landing ground would necessitate a similar concession to the Italians, who were very anxious to secure one near Meidi or Salif (opposite Kamaran). Qadhi Muhammad Ragheb Bey said that the Imam was strongly opposed to granting the Italian Government this permission, and he therefore begged me not to press this proposal at present. I did not pursue it further, judging it better to leave it for future discussion if His Majesty's Government wish to press it.

39. The tension between the Yemen and Saudi Arabia continued throughout the time that the mission was at Sana, and under your instructions I took several opportunities of expressing the hope that direct hostilities would be avoided. I was assured that the Imam was most anxious to find a peaceful solution, and soon after Ramadan a Yemeni mission under Seyyid Abdullah-al-Wazir was despatched to Abha to negotiate a settlement. In my opinion the Imam intended throughout to avoid war, but he was very suspicious of Ibn Saud's intentions, and wished by a strong show of force, and by delay, to secure the best possible terms for himself. Defeats in Nejran at the hands of the Beni Yam prompted him to negotiate, and his knowledge of the attitude of the British and Italian Governments may have inclined him in the same direction. But Italian influence at Sana is greatly exaggerated, and British friendship is too new to carry much weight yet. The Imam is in any case too suspicious of all foreigners to trust much in their advice or to submit his general policy to their guidance.

40. I had anticipated that the Imam might raise the question of the importation of munitions into the Yemen from the United Kingdom, but he did not do so in any form, and I did not allude to it.

#### VI.—General Remarks.

41. It is of interest to note certain factors which have helped to make the work of my mission considerably easier than, for instance, that of Sir Gilbert Clayton in 1926.

42. In the first place, the treaty which it has been my task to negotiate is much shorter than the draft with which Sir Gilbert had to deal. Several clauses

have been dropped which were contentious, cumbersome, or of minor importance, and the number of articles have been reduced from sixteen to seven. Credit for this useful abridgment of the former rather unwieldy document is due to Sir Keith Stewart, Sir Stewart Symes and to the Imam himself.

43. Secondly, agreement has been facilitated by the adoption of Sir Gilbert Clayton's proposed dilatory clause regarding the frontier, whereby its present position has been stabilised for the period of the treaty, and its final settlement has been postponed for future decision.

44. A third contribution to the solution of the problem has been the device of the "admonitory document which has secured the evacuation of territory, the release of prisoners and hostages, and the removal of trade restrictions without hurting the Imam's feelings by including these points in the text of the treaty. By this means the Imam's dislike of making any surrender on paper has been circumvented, and His Majesty's Government have obtained peacefully essential objects of their policy, and have at length honoured in full their obligations to the Audhali tribe and the Amir of Dhala.

45. Fourthly, the Imam's very real desire to end his long-standing quarrel with the British Government has been strengthened by the increasing tension of his relations with Ibn Saud. He naturally did not wish to be caught between two fires, and the growing danger of war with his powerful northern neighbour made him more ready to adjust his differences with the British in the south. This motive is especially strong now that he and his Ministers are growing concerned about securing a peaceful succession to the Imamate. Some years ago the Imam secured the election of his eldest son, Ahmed, as his heir, but this innovation, which aims at substituting hereditary succession for a purely elective rulership, has still to stand the test of events when the Imam dies, and the Imam is the more anxious to bequeath a stable State recognised by leading Powers and in friendly relations with its neighbours.

46. A fifth cause which has influenced the Imam's policy—and probably the strongest of all—has been his appreciation of British air power. His troops were expelled by air action from the Lower Audhali country in 1925 and from the Amirate of Dhala in 1928. The later operation involved places within his own territory as well as districts which he had seized in the Aden Protectorate, and the deep impression which it made upon him was proved by his immediate compliance with the demands of the Al Ain ultimatum in 1931 and of the Subeihi ultimatum in 1933. I was authorised to warn the Imam that a failure of my mission would probably result in a solution of the Audhali and Sanah questions by force. I wished, if possible, to avoid the use of this threat, and the whole of the treaty was negotiated without any need to hint at it. But after the treaty terms had been agreed the Imam's delay in ordering the fulfilment of the conditions of the admonitory document led me (as mentioned in paragraph 22 of my report) to speak seriously to Qadhi Muhammad Ragheb Bey of the dangers of a breakdown. Although it proved unnecessary for me to use language of this nature to the Imam himself, there is no doubt that he realised the situation, and he was therefore anxious to accept the alternative which my mission offered of a friendly settlement with His Majesty's Government.

47. The mission were greatly impressed by the evidences of the internal strength of the Government of the Yemen. The present Imam had already secured control of the Zeidi highlands while the country was still a Turkish province, but the withdrawal of the Turks at the end of the Great War left the lowlands and some of the mountain districts in a state of chaos. Out of this confusion the Imam has built up a highly centralised State and has established law and order among the unruly tribes. It was interesting to observe the contrast between the complete security in which heavily laden caravans now journey unharmed through the country by day and night with the risks which were formerly run by travellers in the Yemen, and which, unfortunately, are still run in parts of the Aden Protectorate.

48. In conclusion, I wish to emphasise the extent to which the success of the mission has been due to loyal co-operation in their respective spheres of all its members. Mr. Champion's help was invaluable. He had an intimate knowledge of the subject, and his mastery of Arabic (both spoken and written), and also of French (in which language our conversations with Qadhi Muhammad Ragheb Bey were largely conducted) was of supreme value. I relied throughout on his sound judgment and his good advice, and I desire to commend his services strongly



to your notice. Lieutenant the Hon. R. A. B. Hamilton, of the Aden Protectorate Levies, acted as transport officer and as my personal aide-de-camp. He was also in charge of the Aden Protectorate Levy signallers, who worked our indispensable wireless set. His efficiency and unvarying equanimity and cheerfulness through all the vicissitudes of the negotiations were a great asset, and I was impressed, on close acquaintance with him, by his capacity and suitability for the political employment which he desires.

49. Khulussi Effendi Khairi, whose services were borrowed from the Government of Palestine as interpreter for the mission, fully justified his selection. He is a capable interpreter, and he adapted himself easily to his surroundings in a country the people and conditions of which are in many ways in striking contrast to the part of the Arab world to which he is accustomed. His religion and his good manners and conduct made him an acceptable intermediary to the Imam and his Ministers. Mr. C. J. Vyas, who acted as medical officer to the mission, is an Indian subordinate medical service officer, whose services have for some time been lent to his Highness the Sultan of Lahej in connexion with dispensary work, which has brought him into close contact with Arabs of various classes. He is a Hindu, but was quite happy in the strictly Moslem atmosphere of Sana. The health of the mission was fortunately excellent, and in the absence of any serious demands by its members on his professional services, Mr. Vyas found scope for his energy and ability in the treatment of over a thousand local patients. He was also called into consultation with Italian, Dutch and Egyptian *confrères* on the health of the Imam, who has for some years suffered from a complaint of the kidneys, and who was obviously pleased with Mr. Vyas's quiet self-possession and efficiency. Mr. Saleh Jafar, an Arab gentleman who is employed by the Aden Residency in a political capacity at Hodeidah, accompanied the mission, and his knowledge of the country and personal acquaintance with the Imam's entourage, combined with his tact and discretion, were of great assistance. It will be recalled from my previous reports that Mr. Saleh Jafar visited Sana twice about a year ago at the Imam's invitation and with my permission, and under my instructions he was then able to give to the Imam a verbal explanation of certain points—notably in connexion with the Red Sea islands—which helped materially in clearing the way for the visit of the mission. The officer and other ranks of the Aden Protectorate Levies who accompanied the mission rendered valuable service, especially in maintaining regular wireless communication with Aden, but for which it would have been impossible to accomplish the work of the mission without much greater delay.

50. I have referred in paragraph 28 to Captain B. W. Seager's work in connexion with the evacuation of the Audhali country, and I wish to record my high opinion of the manner in which he carried out a task requiring careful judgment, patience and tact under conditions of considerable physical strain and discomfort among people and in a country quite new to him. He was ably assisted by Flight-Lieutenant E. C. Lewis, Royal Air Force, who accompanied him on the plateau.

51. The mission was greatly indebted throughout to the close co-operation of the authorities at Aden under the Acting Resident, Lieutenant-Colonel H. M. Wightwick, and the Officer Commanding the Forces, Group Captain O. T. Boyd, O.B.E., M.C., A.F.C.

52. As I have stated, the mission was conveyed from Aden to Hodeidah in H.M.S. *Hastings*, and from Hodeidah to Aden in H.M.S. *Penzance*, and their thanks are due to the Commander-in-chief, Mediterranean, and to Captain S. C. Sandford, O.B.E., R.N., and Commander R. H. Bevan, R.N.

53. Finally, I wish to record the gratitude of the mission to His Majesty the Imam and his Ministers for the generous hospitality and constant courtesy and attention which they showed in their efforts to ensure our comfort and contentment during a visit which was for us both a great pleasure and a notable experience.

I have, &c.

B. R. REILLY, Resident, &c.

Enclosure 1 in No. 29.

*Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Co-operation.*

PREAMBLE.

HIS Majesty the King of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India, on the one part, and His Majesty the King of the Yemen, the Imam, on the other part, being desirous of entering into a treaty on a basis of friendship and co-operation for their mutual benefit, have resolved to conclude this treaty and have appointed as their plenipotentiaries:

His Majesty the King of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India:

For Great Britain and Northern Ireland:

Lieutenant-Colonel Bernard Rawdon Reilly, C.I.E., O.B.E.;

For India:

Lieutenant-Colonel Bernard Rawdon Reilly, C.I.E., O.B.E.;

His Majesty the King of the Yemen, the Imam:

The Qadhi Muhammad Ragheb-bin-Rafiq;

Who, having communicated their full powers, found in good order and due form, have agreed as follows:—

ARTICLE 1.

His Majesty the King of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India, acknowledges the complete and absolute independence of His Majesty the King of the Yemen, the Imam, and his kingdom in all affairs of whatsoever kind.

ARTICLE 2.

There shall always be peace and friendship between the high contracting parties, who undertake to maintain good relations with each other in every respect.

ARTICLE 3.

The settlement of the question of the southern frontier of the Yemen is deferred pending the conclusion, in whatever way may be agreed upon by both high contracting parties in a spirit of friendship and complete concord, free from any dispute or difference, of the negotiations which shall take place between them before the expiry of the period of the present treaty.

Pending the conclusion of the negotiations referred to in the preceding paragraph, the high contracting parties agree to maintain the situation existing in regard to the frontier on the date of the signature of this treaty, and both high contracting parties undertake that they will prevent, by all means at their disposal, any violation by their forces of the above-mentioned frontier, and any interference by their subjects, or from their side of that frontier, with the affairs of the people inhabiting the other side of the said frontier.

ARTICLE 4.

After the coming into force of the present treaty, the high contracting parties shall, by mutual agreement and concord, enter into such agreements as shall be necessary for the regulation of commercial and economic affairs, based on the principles of general international practice.

ARTICLE 5.

(1) The subjects of each of the high contracting parties who wish to trade in the territories of the other shall be amenable to the local laws and decrees, and shall receive equal treatment to that enjoyed by the subjects of the most favoured Power.

(2) Similarly, the vessels of each of the high contracting parties and their cargoes shall receive, in the ports of the territories of the other, treatment equal to that accorded to the vessels and their cargoes of the most favoured Power, and



the passengers in such vessels shall be treated in the ports of the territories of the other party in the same manner as those in the vessels of the most favoured Power therein.

(3) For the purposes of this article in relation to His Majesty the King of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India:—

- (a) The word "territories" shall be deemed to mean the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, India and all His Majesty's Colonies, protectorates and all mandated territories in respect of which the mandate is exercised by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom.
- (b) The word "subjects" shall be deemed to mean all subjects of His Majesty wherever domiciled, all the inhabitants of countries under His Majesty's protection, and, similarly, all companies incorporated in any of His Majesty's territories shall be deemed to be subjects of His Majesty.
- (c) The word "vessels" shall be deemed to mean all merchant vessels registered in any part of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

#### ARTICLE 6.

This treaty shall be the basis of all subsequent agreements that may be concluded between the high contracting parties now and in the future for the purposes of friendship and amity. The high contracting parties undertake not to assist nor to connive at any action directed against the friendship and concord now sincerely existing between them.

#### ARTICLE 7.

The present treaty shall be ratified as soon as possible after signature, and the instruments of ratification shall be exchanged at Sana. It shall come into force on the date of the exchange of ratifications, and shall thereafter remain in force for a period of forty years.

And in witness whereof the respective plenipotentiaries have signed the present treaty and have thereto affixed their seals.

This treaty is done in two copies, in the English and Arabic languages, and, should doubt arise as to the interpretation of any of these articles, both high contracting parties shall rely on the Arabic text. Done at Sana in the Yemen, this eleventh day of February, 1934, A.D. (corresponding to the twenty-sixth day of Shawwal, 1352, A.H.).

B. R. REILLY,  
(Seal.)

Enclosure 2 in No. 29.

*The Constitutional Note.*

*Lieutenant-Colonel Reilly to the Imam.*

Your Majesty,

WITH reference to the question which arose in the course of the negotiations for the Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Co-operation which we have signed this day, I have the honour to inform your Majesty that all treaties concluded by His Majesty the King of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India in respect of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and in respect of India are deemed to be binding in every respect upon His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and upon the Government of India also.

(Respects.)

B. R. REILLY,  
*His Britannic Majesty's Commissioner  
and Plenipotentiary.*

Sana, February 11, 1934 (Shawwal 26, 1352, A.H.).

Enclosure 3 in No. 29.

*The Slave Trade Notes.*

(1) *Lieutenant-Colonel Reilly to the Imam.*

Your Majesty,

I HAVE the honour to refer to my conversations with your Majesty's plenipotentiary relating to the present common desire of all enlightened nations to co-operate in the suppression of the slave trade, and to enquire whether your Majesty will enable me to convey to His Britannic Majesty's Government your Majesty's assurance that you will by every possible means assist them in their endeavours to prevent the African slave trade by sea.

(Respects.)

B. R. REILLY,  
*His Britannic Majesty's Commissioner  
and Plenipotentiary.*

Sana, February 10, 1934 (Shawwal 25, 1352, A.H.).

(2) *The Imam to Lieutenant-Colonel Reilly.*

In the Name of God the Merciful and Compassionate!

After tendering our sincere respects, in reply to your esteemed note dated the 25th Shawwal, 1352 (corresponding to the 10th February, 1934), wherein you expressed a desire to have assurances from our Government as to the prohibition of the slave trade, we inform your Excellency that we agree to the prohibition of the African slave traffic, and we will command all our Amils (Governors) to do their utmost to prevent it in all the Mutawakkili (Yemen) country and ports.

(Respects.)

Sana, Shawwal 25, 1352, A.H. (February 10, 1934).

Enclosure 4 in No. 29.

*The Red Sea Islands Notes.*

(1) *The Imam to Lieutenant-Colonel Reilly.*

In the Name of God the Merciful and Compassionate!

AFTER tendering our sincerest respects and friendliest wishes, we most heartily pray Almighty God to cause the Treaty of Friendship, which you and our plenipotentiary have to-day succeeded in completing and signing, to be conducive of prosperity and happiness to both Governments now and in the future. We beseech Him daily to perfect the friendly relations between the two Governments.

We therefore hasten to inform your Excellency that the fact that there has been no discussion or reference, in the treaty now concluded, in regard to the well known islands which were occupied during the Great War, and which have not been restored and handed over to the Yemen which is their original mother, will not invalidate or detract from our fundamental and natural proprietary rights over these islands, nor prejudice our complete and absolute reservation and preservation of the said rights. Our clear and legal rights over them will continue firm for ever.

We particularly request you to do your utmost by submitting this our representation to your great Government, and we ever hope that you will use your best endeavours in this matter.

We beg to confirm our sincere respects to your Excellency.

Dated Shawwal 26, 1352, A.H. (11th February, 1934).



(2) *Lieutenant-Colonel Reilly to the Imam.*

Your Majesty,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Majesty's esteemed letter, dated the 26th Shawwal, 1352 (corresponding to the 11th February, 1934), which contains your Majesty's statement in regard to the islands. On my return to Aden I shall without delay send your Majesty's statement to His Majesty's Government.

I take this opportunity to convey to your Majesty the expression of my high esteem and regard, and to repeat my deep satisfaction at the auspicious conclusion of the blessed treaty which has been happily signed to-day.

(Respects.)

B. R. REILLY,  
His Britannic Majesty's Commissioner  
and Plenipotentiary.

Sana, February 11, 1934.

Enclosure 5 in No. 29.

*Note on the Anglo-Yemeni Boundary.*

ARTICLE 3 of the treaty stabilises, pending a final decision, the actual frontier existing on the 11th February, 1934, the date of the signature of the treaty. This is as follows:—

From approximately Husn Murad to the Wadi Bana it is identical with the old demarcated Anglo-Turkish boundary as shown on official maps of the Aden Protectorate. From the demarcated point on the Wadi Bana, eastwards, it follows tribal boundaries which have never been demarcated in detail on the ground, and which the inaccuracy of existing maps makes it impossible to define precisely on paper, but which are known to the tribes concerned. These are the northern and eastern boundary of the Upper Yafa tribe, excluding Rubeiatein, the boundaries between the Upper Yafa, Lower Yafa and Fadhi tribes, and Beidha, the north-western and northern boundary of the Audhali tribe, the western boundary of the Aulaqi tribe, and the western and north-western boundary of Beiha, including the Masabi country. Beyond this point lies the Ruba-al-Khali (the "Empty Quarter"), in which no boundary has been attempted.

[E 1888/279/91]

No. 30.

*Sir John Simon to Sir A. Ryan (Jedda).*

(No. 36.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, March 27, 1934.

YOUR telegram No. 40 of 21st March: Boundaries in South-Eastern Arabia. Interdepartmental Conference, 23rd March, agreed that His Majesty's Government must take their stand on the "blue line" laid down in 1913 and 1914 Anglo-Turkish conventions.

2. Text of these conventions is being communicated to United States Embassy in Angora in response to a recent enquiry, and United States Government will thus soon know that His Majesty's Government regard "blue line" as eastern boundary of Saudi Arabia. They will presumably pass on this information to the Standard Oil Company of California, who will thus have no excuse for regarding their concession from Ibn Saud as giving them any rights east of that line.

3. Moreover, if any limit is to be put to the extension or consolidation of Ibn Saud's informally exercised authority towards the east and risk is to be avoided of his gradually establishing a claim to the hinterland, and even to the coastal districts of the Arab territories in special relations with His Majesty's Government, "blue line" affords only valid and legal basis for any boundary at all between British and Saudi spheres in South-Eastern Arabia. Question may at

any moment become acute owing to oil or air developments, and objections to leaving it indeterminate any longer are therefore serious.

4. On the other hand, while this issue may in any event have to be faced before long, His Majesty's Government are reluctant to risk unnecessarily provoking a major dispute with Ibn Saud, particularly when he is already in difficulties with the Imam of Yemen. Moreover, if, as a result of such a challenge to his position, Ibn Saud, while outwardly maintaining friendly relations, were to endeavour to stir up desert tribes against the Sheikhs of Qatar or (less probably) Abu Dhabi, the resulting situation might be difficult, since His Majesty's Government, while under no formal obligation to defend them by land, might have to consider lending them assistance. Pending completion of the necessary organisation in Qatar (which must await general agreement with the sheikh about oil concession and proposed guarantee of protection) this would be most difficult. There is also danger that Ibn Saud, when faced with possibility of having to accept "blue line" might intrigue to strengthen his informal influence in Qatar or the trucial sheikhdoms. Possibility must also not be overlooked that Ibn Saud might react to challenge by intensifying his impenetration of hinterland of Qatar and trucial sheikhdoms—e.g., by creation of further Akhwan settlements or by asserting his supremacy over desert tribes; although we might be in a stronger position diplomatically in regard to this if we had previously made our view of his eastern boundary clear to him as suggested in paragraph 7 (b) below.

5. It is impossible from here to estimate importance or reality of these dangers, but it seems desirable to examine them fully in order to leave no possible factor out of account.

6. Main object of His Majesty's Government is to prevent risk of dangerous misunderstanding with American or other interests in the event of oil being found in areas concerned, and to make sure that minor Arab rulers, with whom His Majesty's Government are in special treaty relations, do not fall under Ibn Saud's domination. Recent report from Koweit on extent of Ibn Saud's influence in Qatar peninsula (see Koweit despatch No. C. 17 of 18th January to Political Resident) shows that this danger is serious.

7. Alternatives appear to be—

- (a) To take no initiative with Ibn Saud for the present, but to rely (i) on United States Government informing Standard Oil Company of California of position; (ii) on company not attempting to extend its sphere of operations east of the "blue line"; and (iii) on Ibn Saud refraining for the present from attempts further to extend or consolidate his informal influence eastwards.
- (b) To take some action which would make our views and position clear to Ibn Saud without constituting a direct challenge to his position. This could be done by merely informing him of the United States Embassy's request for copies of the Anglo-Turkish conventions of 1913 and 1914 and of our reply. Diplomatic discussions could then be allowed to take their course and question could, if necessary, be considered of what concessions could be made to Ibn Saud.
- (c) To make a formal communication to Ibn Saud on the subject of the "blue line," which he could not ignore and which he would probably regard as a challenge and feel bound to take up.

8. None of above courses is free from difficulty, but I incline to course (b) as offering best opportunity of making necessary communication to Ibn Saud in least contentious manner. Please telegraph your views as to the relative advantages and disadvantages of courses (a) and (b). If course (b) were adopted, course (c) (which in any case seems open to serious objection) would presumably be unnecessary.

9. As regards paragraph 5 of your telegram No. 40 of 21st March, I agree that it would be best to describe area east of "blue line" as falling within "British sphere of influence," but, in view of terminology of article 3 of 1914 convention and of fact that His Majesty's Government do not claim actual sovereignty over this area, it seems desirable to add the words "appertaining to Qatar." Main objection to describing area as falling under "full sovereignty" of Qatar is that it is uncertain whether sheikh himself would claim such sovereignty, and embarrassing situation would arise if sheikh should fail to come



up to scratch or should represent to Ibn Saud that he was being obliged by His Majesty's Government against his will to put forward claim. Moreover, if area east of line is claimed primarily on ground that it falls within *British* sphere, His Majesty's Government would remain free to adjudicate if necessary between respective claims of Sheikh of Qatar and Sheikh of Abu Dhabi. They have already recognised coastal area up to point immediately north of Khor-el-Odeid as falling within the territory of the latter.

10. Copies of correspondence regarding United States Embassy's enquiry went to you by bag of 22nd March.

11. I shall welcome your observations on whole question.  
(Repeated to India, No. 10, and Bushire, No. 11.)

[E 1976/715/25]

No. 31.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received March 28.)*

(No. 60. Confidential.)

Sir,

*Jedda, March 5, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith the Jedda report for February 1934.

2. Copies have been distributed as in the list appended to the report for January.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

Enclosure in No. 31.

JEDDA REPORT FOR FEBRUARY 1934.

#### I.—Internal Affairs.

28. The month of February was singularly uneventful, except for the preparations for possible war with the Yemen, which were pursued steadily but not ostentatiously. The King remained in Nejd. The heir apparent was at his headquarters at Khamis Mushayt, not far from Abha. The Amir Feisal went off to the country north-east of Medina, ostensibly to take the air and hunt, more probably to inspect the camel parks in that area and to stimulate military preparations in the Northern Hejaz. He came to Jedda on the 18th February and stayed four days. Fuad Bey Hamza reached Abha early in the month and remained there or in that part of the world during the remainder of it.

29. There were no important developments in the economical and financial sphere, but the following matters deserve mention:—

- (a) The Government displayed great eagerness to get delivery of the motor lorries already contracted for, as soon as the importers could assemble them. They placed a new contract with Ford's for fifty more.
- (b) Little was heard in Jedda about oil. Huseyn-al-Awayni (paragraphs 5 and 6 of the January report) called on Sir Andrew Ryan on the 8th February and announced that he was leaving for Egypt on the following day. He hoped to meet Mr. Ydlibi there, and spoke of a possible visit of the latter to Jedda when he himself came back in March. Dr. Nomland, the assistant chief geologist of the Standard Oil Company of California, arrived in Jedda on the 21st February, having travelled overland from Hasa, and stayed two or three days in Riyadh.
- (c) The Government displayed great anxiety to receive a reply to the enquiries they had addressed to His Majesty's Government regarding the standing of the Hejaz Development Corporation (Limited) (paragraph 7 of the January report). The Minister of Finance came in person to see Sir Andrew Ryan on the 7th February, and was given on the 11th February a guarded warning against placing reliance on the corporation. Abdul Hamid Bey Shedig left Jedda on the 21st February, having, so far as is known, settled nothing.

#### II.—Frontier Questions and Foreign Relations in Arabia.

30. The quarrel with the Yemen remained intact. On the 2nd February an official of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs was sent post haste to Jedda to show Sir Andrew Ryan a number of telegrams that had passed between the King and the Imam, polite but stinging, especially the last, which the King had sent two days earlier. Nevertheless, both rulers were playing the game of expecting peace from the projected conference at Abha, despite all disagreeableness on the frontier. A wave of optimism swept over interested circles outside Saudi Arabia as a result of a statement circulated by the Saudi Government themselves through its representatives in London and Cairo about the 7th February. It described the situation in terms which were read as meaning that peace by negotiation was assured. One variant appeared in the *Times* of the 8th February, and the foreign reaction to it was best illustrated by a leading article in the same paper on the 9th February, headed "Arabia Still Fortunate."

31. The Minister of Finance sang a different tune in conversation with Sir Andrew Ryan on the 11th February, when he scouted the idea that the conference could produce a settlement. A few days later the Yemeni delegates, after some delay, reached Abha, but up to the end of the month no news had reached Jedda, or even Mecca, it would appear, of the progress of the negotiations.

32. It is possible that both rulers are too averse from war to let the conference end in such a rupture as would make it unavoidable. Nevertheless, it would be rash to assume that the war cloud has been dissolved. As already stated, the Saudi military preparations continued during the month. There is some reason to believe that the position in the mountainous region over against Saada was easier. There is also some reason to suppose that Ibn Saud's attitude in regard to Najran has, if anything, stiffened.

33. The report that the Iraqi Government had appointed a permanent Chargé d'Affaires to Jedda was confirmed. Their choice has fallen on one Seyyid Kamil-el-Gaylani, the brother of a former Prime Minister, whose obstinacy, but not abilities, he is reported to share. The news that Dr. Abdullah Damluji, formerly Director-General for Foreign Affairs to Ibn Saud, has again become Foreign Minister in Bagdad, is unlikely to impress Saudi opinion favourably.

34. On the 18th February the Minister of Finance informed Sir Andrew Ryan very secretly on behalf of the King that His Majesty had heard of a plot being hatched by ex-King Ali and the Amir of Transjordan to make common cause with the Imam against him. This kind of scare is familiar at times of stress and there is no reason to take the present one seriously.

35. On the 15th February the Legation communicated to the Minister for Foreign Affairs a new proposal by His Majesty's Government regarding arrangements for the projected meeting between Ibn Saud and the Amir of Transjordan (see paragraph 249 of the November report). It was hoped that the meeting might take place on board a cruiser, which will be passing through the Red Sea about the 19th May next, and could bring the Amir and the High Commissioner to a spot outside territorial waters off Wejh. On the 21st February the Amir Feisal took the very unusual course of visiting the branch of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Jedda, for the express purpose of receiving Sir Andrew Ryan and explaining in the nicest possible manner the reasons which would make it impossible for Ibn Saud to proceed overland to Wejh. The King suggested that, unless he could be embarked in the cruiser at Jedda, the matter had better be postponed.

36. The Legation, at the instance of His Majesty's High Commissioner for Transjordan, sent a note of explanation and apology to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in connexion with the accidental violation of Saudi territory on the 20th February by a R.A.F. aeroplane proceeding to Mudawwara, which missed its destination and flew 15 miles to the south before the mistake was realised.

#### III.—Relations with Powers Outside Arabia.

37. The absence of Fuad Bey has almost completely suspended diplomatic business between the British Legation and the Saudi Government, excepting the normal routine of notes and the discussion of some special subjects already mentioned, which have given rise to conversations with the Minister of Finance, and on one occasion with the Amir Feisal. Such few other matters as it was possible to deal with in personal discussion are of no general interest.



38. There is still less to be recorded as regards other Powers represented at Jedda. The Netherlands mission to the Yemen duly reached Sana, and had not returned up to the end of the month. The new Persian Minister visited Mecca and Medina for the first time, but he is still awaiting the King's arrival in the Hejaz to present his letters.

#### IV.—Miscellaneous.

39. The arrival of Dr. Nomland (see paragraph 29 (b) above) provided the occasion for an outing from Jedda so unusual that it is worth recording. With the permission and encouragement of the Minister of Finance, Mr. Philby took a party, in which he was the only Moslem, all the way to Sharaya, on the road from Mecca inland, on the 20th February. It consisted of Mr. Lenahan, the Standard Oil of California representative in Jedda, Mr. Bates, the ornithologist (paragraph 24 of the January report), Mr. Gent, of the Ford Company, Lady Ryan and Mrs. Philby. Owing to the late arrival of Dr. Nomland, it was decided to stay the night at Sharaya, where the Minister of Finance himself appeared with tents, &c., for the party. The romantic glamour of this red-letter night in the annals of European adventure in Arabia was enhanced by the singing of the guards to the music of beaten petroleum cans.

40. Mr. Bates remained in Jedda throughout the month, and had by the end of it collected some 300 specimens of birds, comprising nearly 100 distinct varieties, some extremely rare. Mr. Gent was in Jedda on the business of the Ford Company (see paragraph 29 above), and left on the 28th February. The same day there arrived Mr. D'Arcy Weatherbe, to stay a few days at the Legation and *inter alia* explore the possibilities of Jedda as a place for fishing, in which he is an expert. Mr. D. Black, of Gellatly, Hankey and Co., arrived on the 14th February to take over the management of their local branch from Mr. A. J. Warner, who has been in charge of it for some three years.

41. Mr. A. S. Calvert left Jedda on the 4th February, intending to visit the Transjordan desert, by arrangement between the various authorities concerned before proceeding on leave.

42. Pilgrimage prospects continue to be distinctly better. Talaat Pasha Harb (paragraph 8 of the January report) abandoned a plan for bringing over 100 Egyptian notables on a trial trip to Medina in February, but he is still active in Egypt, and it is understood that some 3,000 pilgrims may be expected from that country. There is no local confirmation of the statement in the Near East and India of the 15th February that arrangements have been made to bring some of them by air. Persians are expected to be a good deal more numerous than in 1932 and 1933. The most important arrivals of British pilgrim ships in February were:

43. From India three ships carrying a total of 3,853 British Indians and 878 other pilgrims. From the Straits Settlements two ships carrying a total of 359 pilgrims.

44. The position in regard to the manumission of slaves in February was as follows:—

On hand at the beginning of the month: Nil.  
Took refuge in February: 1 male, 1 female.  
Manumitted in February and repatriated: 1 male.  
Locally manumitted: Nil.  
On hand at the end of the month: 1 female.

[E 1989/669/91]

No. 32.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 28.)

Sir,

India Office, March 27, 1934.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to transmit to you, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a despatch from the Political Resident, Bushire, dated the 1st March, 1934, on the subject of Koweit-Iraq smuggling.

I am, &c.

S. F. STEWART.

Enclosure in No. 32.

Political Resident, Bushire, to India Office.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Bushire, March 1, 1934.

WITH reference to his Excellency the Ambassador's Bagdad despatch No. 96 dated the 15th February, 1934, which I received after the despatch of my express letter dated the 20th February, 1934, I have the honour to make the following comments:—

2. With regard to the first sentence of paragraph 2 of his Excellency's letter: "There can be no doubt that the Koweitis are inveterate and daring smugglers, both by sea and land, and have themselves largely to blame for the blockade which Ibn Saud maintains against them and for the energetic preventive measures taken by the Persian and Iraqi Governments." I cannot admit that the Koweitis themselves are to blame for Ibn Saud's blockade, nor do I think that His Majesty's Government are of this opinion. However, this is something of a side issue to the present subject.

3. As far as Koweit-Iraq smuggling is concerned, the above-quoted statement is, I venture to point out, not quite correct. The actual state of affairs, which has an important bearing on the question of smuggling, is given in some detail in paragraph 7 of my express letter referred to above, *i.e.*, that, while the Koweitis are smugglers by sea, it is the Iraqis themselves who are smugglers by land, composed of Iraqi tribesmen who visit Koweit and return to their own country with the smuggled goods.

4. With regard to the proposals of the Iraq Government—mentioned in paragraph 3 of his Excellency's letter. The one which concerns the tightening up of manifests has now been accepted in principle by the sheikh, and was dealt with at the conclusion of paragraph 7 and in paragraph 8 of my express letter referred to above.

5. With regard to the agenda mentioned in paragraph 5 of Sir Francis Humphrys's letter. Item (a) deals with the main cause of dispute between the two countries, *i.e.*, smuggling, and if this can be solved, or even partially solved, the relations between the two Governments should improve, especially if item (d)—complaints—can be settled.

Item (b). The settlement of boundaries of the territorial waters of Koweit and Iraq. This would seem to be a complicated matter of some importance, in which His Majesty's Government are presumably interested, and which I venture to suppose could hardly be settled locally without their views being previously ascertained.

Item (c). On the land, as far as I know, no frontier incidents affecting Koweitis and Iraqis have occurred; such incidents have been confined to clashes between the Iraqi customs officials and Iraqi smugglers.

6. With regard to the reasons put forward in paragraph 11 of his Excellency the Ambassador's despatch to the effect that a conference such as the one on smuggling was of the type where the sheikh's representation should be undertaken by British officials. My objections to either Colonel Dickson or myself, or both, representing the sheikh at such a conference are based on consideration for the interests of neither Koweit nor Iraq, but for those of His Majesty's Government. The latter have already a number of commitments of varying responsibility with regard to Koweit affairs. The date gardens, concerning which they gave a definite promise to the sheikh, is one; Ibn Saud's blockade, concerning which no actual promise was given, but certain hopes were held out, is another; the protection of the whole of the Koweit Principality—*vide* India Office despatch, dated the 1st February, 1934, to the Foreign Office—is a third; while oil interests represent a fourth. I do not imagine that His Majesty's Government, if they can avoid it, wish to take on their shoulders any further responsibilities with regard to Koweit. At present the Koweit-Iraq smuggling is not such a responsibility. His Majesty's Government have given promises to neither side, and if Koweit should suffer by lawful retaliatory measures on the part of the Iraq Government (see paragraph 6 (2) of my express letter already quoted), His Majesty's Government are not affected, and the sheikh must take the consequences, of which he has had ample warning. The situation, therefore, seems to be one in which His Majesty's



Government should restrict their efforts to good offices, while themselves formally remaining in the background. I am strongly of opinion, therefore, that the sheikh, at any conference or talk, should be represented by his own representative, with Colonel Dickson or me, or both, present for purposes of advice, as put forward in my telegram (No. 85 of the 25th January, 1934) quoted by Sir Francis Humphrys. If, on the contrary, Colonel Dickson and I appear as actual representatives of the sheikh, then it seems inevitable that His Majesty's Government will assume some direct and, in my opinion unnecessary, responsibility for the smuggling question, more especially if the conference at which we appear is in any way a failure. In other words, there is no need—if I may put it that way,—for His Majesty's Government to pick the chestnuts out of the fire for the sheikh, and possibly burn their fingers in consequence.

7. I think it extremely unlikely that the sheikh will, for the present anyhow, agree to any conference at Bagdad. If the two parties, therefore, cannot be brought together at a formal conference, the only alternative is to proceed by informal conversations covering the various points at issue stage by stage, and the first step in this direction, which in no way commits the Iraq Government to anything, is for an Iraqi customs official to visit Koweit for a discussion with the sheikh on the latter's offer to tighten up his manifest system.

8. To sum up: The smuggling which is prevalent from Koweit into Iraq is a source of loss and annoyance to the Iraq Government. This smuggling takes two forms: (a) by land, the actual smugglers being Iraqi tribesmen, who purchase their goods at Koweit and smuggle them into Iraq; and (b) by sea, in which the Koweitis are themselves concerned as carriers. The Iraq Government have asked for the co-operation of the sheikh to check smuggling. The sheikh is within his legal rights to refuse co-operation, as the burden of checking smuggling rests on the country into which the smuggled goods are taken. On the other hand, if the sheikh does not co-operate, the Iraq Government have various legal methods, stopping the Koweit water-supply being one, with which they can retaliate. The Koweit-Iraq Conference, which was to have taken place recently in Bagdad, did not materialise owing to the sheikh's refusal to give proper authorisation to his representative. The sheikh has, however, agreed to tighten up his manifests, which, if carried out in a way acceptable to the Iraq Government, should considerably lessen (if it does not altogether stop) the smuggling by sea, and it is on the sea and not on the land that regrettable incidents have taken place by the action of Iraqi customs officials shooting Koweiti boatmen. The next step, therefore, is for an Iraqi customs official, as suggested by the sheikh, to visit Koweit for discussion with the sheikh on the subject of manifests. With regard to Koweit being represented at any conference by British officials: this would, in my opinion, tend to make His Majesty's Government directly responsible for the Koweit-Iraq smuggling question and thus unnecessarily add to their commitments.

I am sending a copy of this despatch to the Government of India and to his Excellency the Ambassador at Bagdad.

I have, &c.

T. G. FOWLE, *Lieut.-Colonel,*  
*Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.*

[E 2058/79/25]

No. 33.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received April 3.)*

(No. 49.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Jedda, April 2, 1934.

YOUR telegram No. 39.

I wrote suitably to Minister for Foreign Affairs on 29th March. Yusuf Yasin, who has since been appointed Acting Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, called to-day. He stated that as a precautionary measure the Amir Feisal and King's third son were leaving in two or three days for Tihamat Asir and Riyadh respectively to command troops in those places.

He read ten telegrams exchanged between the King and Imam from 26th March to 1st April. The King has categorically refused to suspend advance unless he gets satisfaction on following points:—

- (a) The King to retain Badr and Wadi Habuna, which are now admitted to be occupied by Ikhwan. Imam to retain Waila and all south of it. Intervening area, i.e., Wadi Najran proper, to be neutralised or divided on basis of *status quo*.
- (b) Imam to withdraw from Beni Malik-Faifa-Abadil area and to remove Abdul Wahhab Idrisse to place previously agreed upon.

The King has rejected Imam's proposal that he should suspend action pending despatch of Abdullah-al-Wazir to Mecca to furnish explanations. He regards this as a mere time-saving device. His last telegram practically amounts to an ultimatum supported by continuation of military action, although he still describes latter as defensive.

According to Yusuf Yasin, there has still been no armed conflict.

I asked as from myself whether even now it would not be prudent for the King to confine himself to action in territory which he claims as his own. Reply was non-committal, but implied that it might be a matter of military necessity to cross the frontier.

In the King's speech of 22nd March, which reached me after last conversation, he reproached other Moslem rulers and bodies for not having attempted to reconcile parties of the dispute and get at the truth. I therefore again, as from myself, reminded Yusuf Yasin that King Feisal had offered to mediate, and asked whether possibilities of settlement by mediation had been fully explored. Yusuf Yasin referred to various appeals to the King after he had ordered advance, and said that the King had at no stage either sought or rejected mediation. He intimated pretty clearly that it was now in any case too late.

[E 1803/2/25]

No. 34.

*Sir John Simon to Sir E. Drummond (Rome).*

(No. 318.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, April 5, 1934.*

I HAVE had under consideration your Excellency's despatch No. 241 of the 17th March, but I remain of the opinion that it would be inexpedient to accede to the proposal of the Italian Government, that a conference of British and Italian experts should be held to discuss the situation in South-Western Arabia.

2. It is true that the developments which have taken place there since my despatch No. 39 of the 15th January was written make it appear less likely that King Ibn Saud and the Imam of the Yemen will reach a solution of their differences without recourse to hostilities; but there appear to be no new joint steps to promote a peaceful settlement of the dispute, which His Majesty's Government and the Italian Government could agree, as a result of such a conference, to take. They can only continue, as in the past, to urge moderation upon both Sovereigns, should further opportunity arise. Meanwhile, so long as the Italian Government maintain their present attitude upon the questions of King Ibn Saud's rights over Asir and of the Imam's alleged claims in respect of that territory, no conference can lead to agreement upon these points. Moreover, discussion of them, if hostilities do in fact break out, would be academic. It might even lead to the disappearance of the existing measure of agreement in regard to the attitude to be adopted by the two Governments in case of a Saudi-Yemeni conflict, as recorded in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the conclusions of the Rome conversations of 1927.

3. Since, however, the Italian Government continue to reiterate their thesis that the question of the sovereignty of Asir remains open, and to imply, as is done in the seventh and eighth paragraphs of Signor Suvich's letter to you, a translation of which was enclosed in your despatch, that in regarding Asir as now rightfully a part of King Ibn Saud's dominions, His Majesty's Government are acting at variance with the spirit of the Rome conversations of 1927 and the declarations of the British representatives during those meetings, His Majesty's



Government cannot, merely in order to avoid controversy, refrain any longer from making the grounds of their attitude clear without a risk that the Italian Government may doubt their good faith.

4. I request, therefore, that, in replying to Signor Suvich's letter, you will, using the material in paragraphs 3-7 of my despatch No. 39, explain to him the reasons for the considered view of His Majesty's Government that in international law the sovereignty over the territory ruled by the Idrisi has undoubtedly passed to King Ibn Saud (and that it therefore cannot be considered an open question), and endeavour to clear up the misunderstanding regarding the undertaking of His Majesty's Government to refrain from addressing to the Government of King Ibn Saud a formal communication of their recognition of his sovereignty over Asir. It may be well to add in your reply that His Majesty's Government will naturally continue, in pursuance of the conclusions of the Rome conversations of 1927, not only to refrain from intervention in the present conflict between King Ibn Saud and the Imam, but also to avoid all appearance of taking the part of either of the disputants, while seeking, should further opportunities arise, to use their influence in favour of a peaceful settlement. You may also assure Signor Suvich of my desire to continue to exchange information with the Italian Government regarding the progress of the dispute. You should give him no encouragement to hope that His Majesty's Government will accept the invitation to hold a conference of experts, so long at any rate as the Italian Government maintain their view regarding the status of Asir; but you may inform him that, should he desire further explanation in regard to any special point concerning the policy of His Majesty's Government in Arabian affairs, I shall of course be happy to give it to him when he visits London at the end of the month.

5. I am sending copies of your despatch No. 241 and of this reply to His Majesty's Minister at Jedda.

I am, &c.  
JOHN SIMON.

[E 2354/79/25]

No. 35.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received April 16.)*

(No. 79.)

Sir,

Jedda, March 25, 1934.

IN my telegrams Nos. 45 and 46 of the 24th March, I have reported the main points in my conversation with Sheikh Yusuf Yasin that morning regarding the Saudi-Yemen situation. I now enclose a fairly full record of what passed. The discussion covered the ground so completely that I do not think it necessary to send you any further account of the less interesting conversation I had with Taufiq Bey Hamza on the 22nd March, when he brought me the message reported in my telegram No. 42 of the 23rd March.

2. The *dénouement*, which has been so long expected, has taken a rather unexpected shape. When I received the first intimation that Ibn Saud had ordered his troops to advance, I was in some doubt as to whether his apparent desire to localise any armed conflict was due to unwillingness to commit himself too irretrievably to a war which may be disastrous for him, or to unwillingness to let the full importance of the crisis be publicly realised until after the pilgrimage.

3. The King might well shrink from war, if he could avoid it without crushing humiliation. Only a couple of days ago his Director-General of Military Organisation told a member of my staff that the Saudi Government knew all about the Yemeni army. The Imam, he said, could put 12,000 regulars into the field at once and could produce another 13,000 regulars and 50,000 irregulars in due course. The Director-General added that, in his opinion, Ibn Saud could smash the Imam's army within two months; but, if there be anything in these figures, one cannot think that Ibn Saud likes the prospect of tackling 75,000 men of any quality with the troops he has mobilised.

4. My conversation with Sheikh Yusuf Yasin, however, seems to show that the King has decided to take every risk. I trust you will not think I went too far in what I said to the Sheikh. I felt that, even now, there might be some chance of averting a declared state of war, if Ibn Saud could be induced not to enter the

Imam's territory. I had, indeed, little hope of influencing the course of events in any way, but it seemed to me worth while to make the attempt, no longer using general counsels of moderation, but concentrating on this one endeavour and using any and every argument that I could think of at short notice. It was all the more necessary to take a line quickly, as Sheikh Yusuf Yasin was hurrying back to Mecca for the pilgrimage, which, followed as it is by the Feast of Sacrifice, normally paralyses ordinary activities for four days.

5. I am sending copies of this despatch and enclosure to His Majesty's Ambassador in Rome, and to the Chief Commissioner at Aden. H.M.S. *Penzance* being now here, I am keeping her commander fully informed, and am relying on him to send any necessary reports to the Commander-in-chief, Mediterranean Fleet, and the senior naval officer, Red Sea Sloops.

I have, &c.  
ANDREW RYAN.

Enclosure in No. 35.

*Memorandum respecting the Saudi-Yemen Situation.*

SHEIKH YUSUF YASIN came to see me this morning. The following are the main points in a conversation which lasted over two hours. The order is not always that of the actual discussion, as we came back on certain subjects in order to elucidate them. I have omitted many points which were touched on incidentally only or are unimportant.

2. The King, said Sheikh Yusuf, was desirous of peace. There had been many occasions in the past when he might have gone to war with the Imam, but he had always avoided it. He had no territorial ambitions in respect of the Yemen. His dominions were quite large enough. The failure of the Abha Conference and of his direct negotiations with the Imam compelled him to defend his rights. It was hardly necessary to go into the reasons for his friendship with His Majesty's Government. He wished to keep them informed as a duty of friendship and in order to seek their advice. He was confident that His Majesty's Government were on his side.

3. Sheikh Yusuf went on to say that he was not sure how much I had been told by Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman and Taufiq Bey Hamza. He would, therefore, recapitulate the developments which had produced the present situation. I would remember that at an earlier stage the King and the Imam had reached a preliminary agreement regarding the determination of frontiers, the disposal of the Idrisi, the discussion of the Najran question and a meeting of delegates to draw up a treaty of friendship. The King had thereupon ordered his troops to keep to their positions and to make no advance. Even before that the Commander-in-chief had been directed to refrain from any aggression.

4. Before the delegates met the Imam had taken forward action. He had sent Abdul Wahhab-el-Idrisi to occupy Al Ardha, where a Saudi garrison of fifty men were made prisoners. He had made approaches to the Beni Malik, some of whom took his part, and to the people of Faifa, who resisted. He had occupied both districts, sent officials there and collected taxes. The Imam had stated, in reply to remonstrances, that these acts were done before his orders had reached his commanders, and had promised to evacuate the occupied areas, subject to the King's pardoning the local dissidents. The King had done this, but there had been no withdrawal. On the contrary the Yemeni forces in the Beni Malik area had been reinforced.

5. Sheikh Yusuf was quite vague as regards dates, and his information as to the distribution of tribes differed somewhat from that given me by Fuad Bey Hamza. I gathered, however, that the area affected comprised the two mountains called Beni Malik and Faifa, and the tribes bearing those names as well as others like the Abadil and Bil-Ghazi, Al Ardha being apparently in the country of the Abadil. (The fact is that neither Fuad Bey nor Sheikh Yusuf have really precise information, but it may be taken that the most salient features of the disputed area are the two mountains named.)

6. The position when the delegates met was that the occupation was maintained despite all the promises given by the Imam. The latter had gone so far as to ask the King to release all prisoners at Jizan, a demand so astonishing that the



King preferred to ignore it. The assurance of pardon for the local rebels was sent by the Amir Saud through Sayf-al-Islam Ahmed, as that was the only channel available. Sayf-al-Islam Ahmed, however, refused to evacuate until the conference should have ended and until the Yemeni claim to Najran should have been admitted. The King had exercised patience until the end of the negotiations. In the course of these, however, the Imam's delegates had denied any preliminary agreement about the determination of frontiers, the Idrisi, or anything else. At last the King informed the Imam that the negotiations could not be completed, so long as the unlawful occupation of his territory was persisted in, contrary to the preliminary agreement. He suggested that Najran should be neutralised by the withdrawal of the forces of both sides, that the Idrisi should be disposed of as had been agreed, and that the Imam should withdraw from the area of the Beni Malik, &c.

In his latest telegram the Imam had asked the King to recognise his claim to Najran and to withdraw from that area, failing which he could not vacate the area of the Beni Malik, &c.

7. In the end the Imam's failure to keep his promises and his action in sending reinforcements and stirring up trouble among the tribes had compelled the King to order the Amir Saud to advance. He had informed the Imam but had intimated that he would be prepared to resume negotiations, if he, the Imam, would evacuate the occupied area, discuss Najran and proceed with the treaty of friendship. The Amir Saud had set out on the 22nd March, having been preceded two days earlier by some of his troops. There had so far been no clash.

8. After thanking Sheikh Yusuf, I referred to the King's expression of confidence that His Majesty's Government were on his side. They were, indeed, animated by the friendliest dispositions toward him, but they had never passed a judgment the elements for which were lacking. The quarrel related to three areas. Firstly, there was the littoral of Asir, where the position was pretty clear, *i.e.*, the King held it and the Imam had asserted a claim to it without having attempted to enforce his claim. Secondly, there was the mountain area, which fell to be subdivided into two parts, as part of it had belonged to the former Idrisi territory, which the King claimed in virtue of a cession by its previous ruler, while part of it belonged to what was called Asir Surat, where the King's claims rested on some different basis. Thirdly, there was Najran.

9. I said that the message sent to me by the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 22nd March had suggested to my own mind two questions, one of which I could not put to a subordinate secretary, though I had asked him the other. They were these: (1) If the objective were the recovery of territory which the King considered to be his, why should it be contemplated as necessary to cross into territory which was admittedly the Imam's? (2) Was it certain that the acts complained of were those of the Imam and not merely those of Abdul Wahhab, the most strenuous member of the family which had ruled Asir?

10. Sheikh Yusuf took the second question first. He said there was no doubt whatsoever that the Imam had sent his forces, had installed his officials and had collected taxes.

11. In reply to my first question, Sheikh Yusuf said that he had no knowledge of military affairs. It might be necessary to enter Yemeni territory to get the best access to the areas to be recovered.

12. This, I said, did not quite agree with the Amir Feisal's message. He had spoken of an advance to the frontier and to the possible necessity for crossing it, when it had been reached. I urged that any invasion of the Imam's territory would mean war. Sheikh Yusuf asked whether the Imam had not been guilty of aggression, when he entered Saudi territory. I said that, if the King were sure of his title he could no doubt have regarded this as *casus belli*. He had prudently preferred not to do so because it did not suit him. If he entered the Imam's territory he would be putting the Imam in a position to treat his action as hostile and to declare that he had provoked war. This might not suit him either. The position to-day as I saw it was that no formal state of war existed. The position would be very different if, in the immediate future, there were a definite war, the outcome of which no one could foresee. It was generally thought that the King intended to produce this state of affairs immediately after the impending festival, and Sheikh Yusuf himself had just used the phrase, "when the war begins."

13. To reinforce my argument that the King should not precipitate a definite state of war by invading the Imam's territory, I reminded Sheikh Yusuf that the

King was a party to a pact, the Kellogg Pact, the renunciation clause of which did not apply to the present case, but which condemned war. The King would have a position to defend not only militarily but politically.

14. I made it clear throughout that I was speaking merely for myself. Indeed, I observed, I was saying much more than my Government would ever say probably. I was not criticising the King. I was thinking of two interests, that of the King and that of peace.

15. The following further points of some importance came out during the conversation:—

- (a) Sheikh Yusuf said that the King was on perfectly sound ground as regards Jebel Beni Malik and Jebel Faifa, which had been expressly mentioned at the time of the Arwa settlement. I said this was new to me. Sheikh Yusuf said that, when the Imam accepted the King's award, the Imam had expressed disappointment at not getting more, but had said that he would abide by the award and had instructed his delegates not to pursue the question of the Jebels Malik and Faifa. This had always been taken to mean that he agreed to their being regarded as Saudi.
- (b) When Sheikh Yusuf referred to a Saudi withdrawal from Najran, I said we had understood that there were no Saudi forces in that area. Sheikh Yusuf said that there had been forces from Wadi Duwasir at the northern extremity of the valley. When the Yemeni forces got to Habuna and saw Saudi forces in the neighbourhood, the Yemenis retired.
- (c) Sheikh Yusuf said that it had been decided to publish the "Green Book" previously mentioned. It would contain all the documents and show clearly that the King's action was justified.
- (d) Sheikh Yusuf thought it unlikely that the King would go to the front. There had been some idea that he might, but he had no present intention of doing so.

ANDREW RYAN.

Jedda, March 24, 1934.

[E 2358/739/91]

No. 36.

Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received April 16.)

(No. 84.)

Sir,

Jedda, March 29, 1934.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your printed despatch No. 81 of the 27th February, in which you call for my observations on the subject of enclosed correspondence regarding the relations between His Majesty's Government and the Sheikh of Koweit, viz., India Office letter to the Foreign Office of the 1st February and Foreign Office letter to the India Office of the 24th February. These letters deal with the following subjects:—

- (a) Possible declaration of a protectorate over Koweit.
- (b) Gaps in the existing agreements between His Majesty's Government and the Sheikh of Koweit.
- (c) Direct correspondence between the sheikh and Ibn Saud.
- (d) Obligations of His Majesty's Government in regard to Koweit.
- (e) Suggested substitution of a formal treaty for the existing agreements between His Majesty's Government and the sheikh.

2. As regards (a) above, it has already been decided not to pursue at present the question of declaring a protectorate. All that I need say in this connexion, therefore, is that if at any future time it should prove more practicable than it is at present to declare a protectorate, it would greatly clarify the situation as between His Majesty's Government and Ibn Saud and would place the former in a much stronger position *vis-à-vis* of the latter. Looked at from this point of view the policy of His Majesty's Government in regard to Koweit should, in my opinion, be considered to some extent in conjunction with the question, which has recently become active, of their policy in regard to the other areas to the east and south-east of Ibn Saud's dominions.

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3. The subjects at (b), (d) and (e) above are so far outside my province that I cannot usefully offer any observations on them. I propose therefore to confine myself to the question of direct correspondence between the Sheikh of Koweit and Ibn Saud on official subjects. There is general agreement, I think, as to the desirability of controlling this correspondence and the only question which arises is that of the best means of establishing an effective control, having regard to both practical and legal considerations.

4. So far as the practical considerations are concerned, I am inclined to share your view as to the inadequacy of the course indicated in paragraph 5 (1) of the Political Resident's despatch to the India Office of the 25th October. You have yourself pointed out that it would be difficult for His Majesty's Government to disavow communications addressed by the sheikh to Ibn Saud without the approval of the Political Agent, unless communications which had been approved by him bore some indication of that fact. I may add that this alternative no less than the other would necessitate an undertaking not only with the sheikh, but with Ibn Saud. It would have to be made clear to the latter that unapproved communications could not be invoked against either His Majesty's Government or the sheikh himself and that communications addressed by the King on his side to the sheikh must be considered not only by the sheikh but by the Political Agent. If this position were established the effect would be much the same as that of Colonel Fowle's second alternative, except for one thing, namely, the difficulty of discriminating between official and unofficial communications. This difficulty appears to me to be very great in the case of two rulers whose practice appears to be to exchange purely personal letters and to deal with official matters in enclosures appended to them.

5. The adoption of Colonel Fowle's second alternative would not obviate the danger of the sheikh compromising his position by direct letters, but it would establish quite definitely the fact that such letters could have no sort of official character. It may perhaps be hoped that both rulers would then realise that their direct correspondence had better be confined to personal greetings and news. It remains to be considered whether the legal position is such as to enable His Majesty's Government to impose the proposed system, firstly, on the sheikh, and, secondly, on Ibn Saud. It is not for me to deal with this question as regards the sheikh, but I submit the following observations as regards Ibn Saud.

6. When the Treaty of Jedda was being negotiated His Majesty's Government wished to include in it a clause similar to article 6 of the Treaty of the 26th December, 1915, by which Ibn Saud undertook "to refrain from all aggression on, or interference with the territories of Koweit, Bahrein and of the Sheikhs of Qatar and the Oman Coast, who are under the protection of the British Government and who have treaty relations with the said Government." The use of "who" in this clause seems to confine the application of the words "under the protection of" to the Sheikhs of Qatar, &c. Ibn Saud rejected the clause and His Majesty's Government accepted the substance of a counter-proposal by Ibn Saud, subject to the addition of the words "who are in special treaty relations with His Britannic Majesty's Government." This produced article 6 of the Treaty of Jedda as we now have it. The word "who" stands, but was perhaps not intended to be used limitatively. Anyhow, His Majesty's Government had made it clear in their instructions to Sir G. Clayton that they attached the same meaning to the form of clause to which they were willing to agree as to the clause they had themselves proposed.

7. After the conclusion of the Treaty of Jedda, His Majesty's Government communicated to Ibn Saud a number of treaties with Arabian rulers. In the case of Koweit they communicated only the agreement of the 23rd January, 1899, together with two minor agreements of the 24th May, 1900, and the 25th February, 1904, regarding arms and postal matters. In the covering note, however, the Acting Agent and consul at Jedda reproduced the following explanation from Foreign Office despatch No. 111 of the 29th September, 1927:—

"His Majesty's Government have informed the Sheikh of Koweit that, so long as he and his heirs and successors act up to their obligations under the agreement of 1899, His Majesty's Government undertake to support them and accord them their good offices, but at the same time His Majesty's Government have reserved to themselves the right to interpret that term at their discretion. His Majesty's Government have also assured the sheikh that they recognise (1) that the town of Koweit and its boundaries belong

to him and to his heirs after him; (2) that all his arrangements shall remain in the hands of himself and his heirs; and (3) that they will not take customs or anything in any lands they may rent, or in which they may dwell, within the limits of Koweit. Finally, His Majesty's Government have assured the sheikh that Koweit shall be recognised as an independent principality under British protection."

8. Article 6 of the Treaty of Jedda recognises the possibility of relations between Ibn Saud and the Sheikh of Koweit, which were to be friendly and peaceful. This, presumably, need not mean more than that Ibn Saud was to observe a friendly and peaceful attitude and Ibn Saud knows that the sheikh is not free to receive the agent of any foreign Power without British sanction. We are, however, eternally dogged by the contradictory expression "independent principality under British protection," a definition which we have tried to abandon, but which remains on record as between His Majesty's Government and Ibn Saud.

9. This survey leaves me doubtful as to whether His Majesty's Government would be on absolutely safe ground in informing Ibn Saud of their own motion that he must not correspond with the Sheikh of Koweit except through British channels. I suggest, therefore, that any communication on the subject to the Saudi Government will be made expressly as the result of an understanding between them and the sheikh.

10. I am sending copies of this despatch to the Government of India and Bushire.

I have, &c.  
ANDREW RYAN.

[E 2435/1206/91]

No. 37.

*Sir P. Loraine to Sir John Simon.—(Received April 19.)*

(No. 171.)  
Sir,

*Angora, April 11, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that on the 2nd April I spoke to the United States Ambassador in the sense of the instructions contained in your despatch No. 125 of the 22nd March, relative to the Anglo-Turkish conventions of 1913 and 1914 regarding boundaries in Eastern Arabia. Mr. Skinner was most grateful for the communication which you had authorised me to make to him. He told me that he had been unable to obtain a copy of the unratified convention of 1913 from the Turkish Government, who had searched their archives for it in vain, and said that His Majesty's Government should realise that matters of private interest, not of State interest, were behind the inquiries which his Embassy had undertaken, the interest residing in the concession of an important petroleum company.

2. It was obvious that my colleague knew nothing about the geography of the region in question. I emphasised the point that what I was showing him was the south-eastern frontier line of Turkish Arabia. His Excellency put no question about what was happening east of that line, so I did not refer to El Qatar. He did enquire why the Ottoman Government had not ratified the 1913 convention, and on this point I was unable to enlighten him. I said, however, that as the 1914 convention confirmed the frontier in question, and, indeed, also prolonged it further southwards to the previously delimited frontier between the Aden Protectorate and the Vilayet of the Yemen, and as that convention had been ratified, the non-ratification of the earlier convention was hardly relevant to the matter in hand.

3. I handed to Mr. Skinner, for retention, the copy of the 1913 convention enclosed in your despatch, and lent him volume XI of *Aitcheson's Treaties*, a further copy of which he said he would purchase for the use of his Embassy.

4. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's representatives at Washington and Jedda.

I have, &c.  
PERCY LORAIN.



[E 2489/79/25]

No. 38.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received April 20.)*

(No. 65.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Jedda, April 20, 1934.

MY telegram No. 62.

Imam's telegram of 14th April, as published this morning, purported to accept the King's demands, but was ambiguous regarding Yam and Idrisis. The King restated demands on 15th April, and, while expressing readiness to receive Abdullah Wazir, intimated his visit would not alter the situation unless demands were effectively complied with. The Imam's reply of 18th April promised complete satisfaction as regards Najran and mountain area, and expressed willingness to surrender Idrisis subject to suggestion that this matter should be referred to persons to be selected by the King from mediation mission now in Mecca.

Newspaper containing text of these telegrams publishes glowing accounts of success on all fronts. These are difficult to follow owing to impossibility of locating most of the places named, but the gist appears to be as follows:—

Two forces advancing in the country north-west and north-east of Saada. Najran cut off except one line of retreat southwards to Waila. Yemenis driven back.

Last fort at Harada taken. Commander and garrison escaped, but were pursued and mostly killed.

Medi closely invested after inhabitants had been warned and mostly left.

Successful operations south of Harada and Medi.

Advance by loyal tribes into fringes of Abadil and Beni Malik and defeat of Abdul Wahhab Idrisis forces by Saudi troops inland from Abu Arish.

Various tribes rallying to Ibn Saud.

I am sending shorter summary to Aden for himself, senior naval officer and Commander-in-chief and to Bushire and Bagdad.

[E 2481/279/91]

No. 39.

*Sir John Simon to Sir A. Ryan (Jedda).*

(No. 51.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, April 21, 1934.

YOUR telegrams No. 47 of 30th March and No. 54 of 8th April: Boundaries in South-Eastern Arabia.

1. In light of your views and those of Government of India and Political Resident, His Majesty's Government have decided to adopt course suggested in paragraph 7 (b) of my telegram No. 36 of 27th March, i.e., to inform Ibn Saud of United States request for information regarding Anglo-Turkish Convention and of reply returned thereto.

2. Addition of rider suggested in penultimate paragraph of your telegram No. 47 of 30th March, to effect that United States request is understood to have been made in order to ascertain limits of Saudi territory and British sphere of influence, seems open to serious objection. Correspondence with United States Embassy in Angora enclosed in my despatch No. 122 of 22nd March shows that it would not be accurate to represent United States enquiry as having been made with this specific purpose. Moreover, communication in this sense might be almost as provocative as that discussed in paragraph 7 (c) of my telegram No. 36 of 27th March and open to similar objections.

3. You should, therefore, unless you see serious objection, address formal note to Saudi Government informing them, as mere matter of courtesy, that United States Government have asked for information regarding the treaty basis of territorial status and boundaries of certain territories and spheres of influence in Eastern Arabia, and in reply have been furnished by His Majesty's Government with copies of the Anglo-Turkish conventions of 29th July, 1913, and of 9th March, 1914. You should attach copies of these conventions for the information of the Saudi Government, explaining that that of 9th March, 1914, was ratified and published. The note should continue on the lines of paragraph 3

of my despatch No. 125 of 22nd March to Angora, making it clear that His Majesty's Government regard the "blue line" laid down in article 11 of the 1913 convention and defined and adopted in article 3 of the ratified convention of 1914 as remaining operative. You may accompany this communication with any oral explanations you consider necessary, bearing in mind, however, considerations urged in paragraph 6 of my despatch No. 125 of 22nd March to Angora.

4. Meanwhile, in order further to guard against danger emphasised in paragraph 2 of your telegram No. 47 of 30th March of Standard Oil Company of California extending their aerial survey work to the east of the "blue line," United States Embassy in London are being informed (with reference to correspondence with them regarding the journey and activities of the aeroplane which the Standard Oil Company of California have sent out to the Hasa coast) that His Majesty's Government think it well to make it clear that they regard the eastern boundary of Ibn Saud's dominions as fixed by the "blue line," and could not agree to the Standard Oil Company's aeroplane flying over, or to the company extending its operations or survey work in any other manner to, the territory to the east of that line.

5. After communication has been addressed to Saudi Government on above lines, but before Saudi Government have had time seriously to challenge it, His Majesty's Government propose to arrange for reconnaissance flights by Royal Air Force flying-boats up to the head of Dohat-es-Salwa and probably also on eastern side and across base of peninsula with a view to obtaining further data as to character of area involved. Please telegraph immediately whether you see objection to this course.

(Repeated to India, No. 17, and Bushire, No. 16.)

[E 2533/79/25]

No. 40.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received April 24.)*

(No. 88.)

Sir,

Jedda, March 31, 1934.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 79 of the 25th March, I have the honour to state that since that date I have received no further information of any value regarding the Saudi-Yemen situation. Rumours of fighting and of Saudi reverses have reached me from Mecca, and my Indian vice-consul reports the existence of much apprehension there. He also reports that the King goes in fear of his life, in consequence of a message that a party has set out from Sana to assassinate him. He relates with circumstantial detail the precautions that were taken before and after the pilgrimage to ensure His Majesty's safety.

2. In my telegram No. 45 of the 24th March I referred to the speech which the King was understood to have made on the 22nd March at his annual dinner to notable pilgrims. This speech was reported in the *Umm-al-Qura* of the 23rd March, but the number was unobtainable in Jedda for several days. It was perhaps deliberately kept back until the pilgrimage should be safely over. When received, it was found to contain the King's speech, a leading article on the situation, and a communiqué. The leading article followed closely the general lines of Sheikh Yusuf Yasin's statement to me on the 24th March, but was not so precise. The communiqué contained little more than an announcement that the King, having achieved nothing by his patience and his negotiations, had ordered the heir apparent to advance to the frontier, with a view to the recovery of the territory invaded by the Imam. I need not trouble you with translations of these documents. I need only note that they do not reproduce Sheikh Yusuf's statement to me that the Imam had made the evacuation of the occupied territory conditional on the renunciation of Najran by Ibn Saud; and they do not explicitly foreshadow a crossing of the frontier, though the note struck in the leading article is a note of war, unless the Imam uses the door to peace which the King has left open, by honouring his previous engagements.

3. The King's speech is fairly hot stuff, but this also reiterates so much that is familiar that a full translation would be wearisome. It begins with the complaint that the King has been done down by the Imam, a man whom he had regarded as his dearest friend. This is followed by a justification of his



proceedings in Asir, where he had spent from 200,000 to 250,000 riyals a year, over and above its revenue, after the Idrisi had asked him to take charge. He goes on to accuse the Imam of breaking the agreement reached in December 1931, *inter alia* by not extraditing the Idrisi after his flight into the Yemen a year later. This leads up to a relation of more recent events, which is chiefly interesting because of certain incidental passages. In one of these the King gives as his reason for patience (apart from the question of expense) the fact that the Imam was negotiating with His Majesty's Government regarding the nine cantons, and he was unwilling to do anything that might be misinterpreted. In another, he claims that the people of Najran have paid taxes to the Al Saud since the time of his ancestors, in virtue of letters and treaties still in existence; and he scoffs at the idea that a Yemeni tribal origin can justify the Imam in claiming them as subjects, any more than he himself could claim his cousin Ibn Shalan, or the Imam could claim the many people of Yemeni origin in Syria. In a third passage the King comments bitterly on the fact that none of the Moslem rulers, representatives or parties have sought to effect a reconciliation and to sift the true from the false, but have merely sent useless expressions of their hopes and good wishes.

4. The *Umm-al-Qura* of the 30th March contains a further communiqué, which I enclose in translation,<sup>(1)</sup> as it is the most recent pronouncement available, and shows that even now Ibn Saud is anxious to present no appearance of seeking war. You will observe that it formally asserts that there has been no fighting so far, despite the rumours referred to in the first paragraph of this despatch.

5. I am sending copies of this despatch and enclosure to Rome, Aden, and the Senior Naval Officer, Red Sea Sloops.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

[E 2534/715/25]

No. 41.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received April 24.)*

(No. 89. Confidential.)

Sir,

Jedda, April 2, 1934.

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith the Jedda report for March 1934.

2. Copies have been distributed as in the list appended to the report for January.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

Enclosure in No. 41.

JEDDA REPORT FOR MARCH 1934.

I.—*Internal Affairs.*

45. Ibn Saud left Riyadh on the 16th March and arrived in Mecca for the pilgrimage on the 20th March. He was reported at the end of the month to be very nervous for his personal safety, and to have taken unusual precautions at pilgrimage time to ensure it. The heir apparent remained in command in the south. His brother, the Amir Feisal, less mobile than he had been, seems to have spent the month in Mecca. Fuad Bey Hamza was certainly at Abha and/or Khamis Musheyd during the greater part of the month, though he may have left for Mecca before it actually ended. His brother Taufiq, who acts as private secretary in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, was used for messages to the Legation, except on two occasions, when diplomatic business was conducted with the Minister of Finance and Sheikh Yusuf Yasin respectively. The latter had, as usual, returned from Riyadh with the King, who rarely releases him from personal attendance.

46. The Saudi-Yemen situation and the pilgrimage, which will be dealt with below, overshadowed all other interests during March. Such internal developments as are worth recording were for the most part connected with the former. Military activity continued. The Saudi motor craft ran to and fro between Jedda and Jizan. A fire broke out on board one on its way south and caused, according to the official account, six deaths.

47. The financial situation remained unchanged. Its most remarkable recent feature has been that, while money is still short, the Saudi Government seems to have become more punctilious in the matter of payments in respect of current transactions, even when the goods have been delivered. They have evidently realised that this is essential in cases where they may want to place further orders.

48. The following items of financial and economic interest may be noted:—

(a) Huseyn-al-Awayni returned to Jedda on the 4th March and was followed by Abdul-Ghani Ydlibi on the 11th March (paragraph 29 (b) of the February report). Mr. Ydlibi called on His Majesty's Minister on the 17th March, a complete, though unappetising, Briton. He expressed the confident belief that he would get the Koweit Neutral Zone Oil Concession, so far as Ibn Saud was concerned, and a concession for oil in the Northern Hejaz on the 21st March. He described also an entirely new bank scheme, which he hoped to put through and which he said had the approval of the Minister of Finance. The plan was to create a bank the capital of which would be subscribed equally, or almost equally, by a British bank and the Saudi Government. This capital of £1 million sterling would be applied to the purchase of War Loan, to be deposited in London as cover for a note issue on a sterling basis. The new bank would have privilege of issue, the note issue would be a forced currency, the bank and the Government would divide the profits and the bank would do ordinary banking business as well. If the Saudi Government would not put up their share of the capital, Mr. Ydlibi's friends would lend them the money, but there would be no other loan transaction. Mr. Ydlibi had not yet fixed his British bank, but anticipated no difficulty as the business would be as safe as houses. His hopes of putting his schemes through in time to leave Jedda on the 21st March were disappointed; he left on the 23rd March.

(b) Messrs. Gellatly, Hankey and Co. (Sudan) (Limited) put through on the 21st March a contract to supply the Government with 2 million rounds of cartridges. This deal was projected last June (paragraph 130 of report for that month), but languished until, at last, the Ministry of Finance concluded it with all speed.

(c) Dr. Nomland, of the Standard Oil Company of California (paragraph 39 of the February report), left for Yanbu on the 22nd March, presumably to assess the oil possibilities of the littoral north of that port. The company imported an aeroplane into Hasa for survey work early in March. They were understood at the end of the month to have obtained, not without difficulty, permission to bring it into use. The survey appears to be planned on an ambitious scale.

(d) The Mecca press boomed the formation of an "Arabian Export Company" with a capital of £5,000 gold in £5 shares. The list of subscribers includes all the best people in native official and commercial life, headed by the Amir Feisal, who took up ten shares.

(e) The Banque Misr group have opened offices in Jedda, with a sign which relates only to the agency for their ships, one of which, the *Zemzem* (ex-Bibby *Leicestershire*), made three voyages with pilgrims from Egypt. The offices are situated in a new house, in front of the Soviet Legation, to which it was formerly intended to serve as an annex.

## II.—*Frontier Questions and Foreign Relations in Arabia.*

49. The evolution of the Saudi-Yemen situation justified the prognostication of some that the King was only waiting to make sure of his pilgrims to force the pace with the Imam. On the 17th March Taufiq Bey Hamza intimated to Sir Andrew Ryan that the Amir Feisal was doubtful as to whether peace would be preserved. On the 22nd March he brought a formal message from the Amir to the effect that neither the meetings of delegates at Abha nor further



direct correspondence between the King and the Imam had produced any result and that the King had ordered his troops to advance, with a view to the recovery of the portion of his territory in the Faifa-Beni Malik area which had been invaded by Abdul Wahhab-al-Idrisi with Yemeni forces. His Majesty had left the door open for peace, but, if no satisfactory communication were received from the Imam by the time the heir apparent reached the frontier, it might be necessary to cross it. Two days later Sheikh Yusuf Yasin called and descanted at length on the course of events and the faithlessness of the Imam. On both occasions Sir Andrew Ryan urged prudence, with special reference to the danger of creating an irreparable situation by entering admittedly Yemeni territory.

50. The advance began on the 20th March. The Amir Saud himself set out on the 22nd March. The King made a speech at his annual dinner for notable pilgrims that evening, in which he vigorously defended his past proceedings and the present action, which had been thrust on him by a man whom he had regarded as his dearest friend. Everything that was published in the *Umm-al-Qura* next day and Sheikh Yusuf Yasin said to Sir Andrew Ryan next day seemed to indicate that the Saudi Government regarded themselves as committed to war, but a communiqué published on the 30th March reported that the King was still pursuing his efforts for peace in correspondence with the Imam and added that no armed conflict had yet occurred. This was probably true, despite rumours in Mecca of fighting and Saudi reverses. There was no news up to the end of the month of any Saudi advance into Najran or towards Medi.

51. Nothing of importance was reported in connexion with Ibn Saud's relations with his other neighbours. His Majesty's Government considered another plan for bringing about the projected meeting between Ibn Saud and the Amir of Transjordan in or near Jedda, but for many reasons the whole matter is likely to be shelved indefinitely. The Saudi Government took in good part the accidental violation of their territory by an R.A.F. aeroplane from Transjordan, an apology for which was conveyed through the Legation in February (paragraph 36 of the last report).

52. On the 11th March Sir Andrew Ryan conveyed privately to the Minister of Finance the result of enquiries regarding the alleged plot mentioned in paragraph 34 of the last report. It was generally reassuring. Taufiq Bey Hamza reverted to the subject on the 17th March in an anxious strain, but his further information was too imprecise to require any urgent action.

### III.—Relations with Powers outside Arabia.

53. Relations between the British Legation and the Saudi Government continued to be most amicable except for one breeze. For a long time past the Saudi Director-General of Public Health has been trying to establish control over the Government of India medical service attached to the Legation, especially as regards the branch dispensary which is opened annually at Mecca at pilgrimage time. The director-general intensified his efforts this year to such an extent that the Legation was forced to take strong action, culminating in a direct telegram sent to the King at Riyadh on the 13th March. This put an end to the trouble for the time being, but the matter is somewhat delicate as the medical service occupies a position which would be anomalous in a less primitive country. A possible settlement, which would give some measure of satisfaction to the Saudi Government, without impairing the freedom and utility of the service, is under consideration.

54. The new Italian Chargé d'Affaires, M. Persico (paragraph 281 of the report for December), arrived in Jedda on the 25th March. He comes direct from a post in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs at Rome, which he held for a year after a career mostly spent in Russia, with variations in Istanbul and Cairo. He seems amiable, but is unenthusiastic about Jedda. He does not appear to have any special knowledge of Arabian affairs.

55. The Netherlands mission (paragraph 38 of last report) return from Sana on the 5th March. The Dutch doctor, who had practised in Jedda for a year under the auspices of the Legation and the Dutch commercial houses and had accompanied M. Adriaanse to Sana, left for good a few days after their return.

56. It was stated in the press on the 30th March that the ratifications of the Saudi-Afghan treaty of the 5th May, 1932, were to be exchanged next day, Afghanistan being represented by the Minister in Cairo, who comes on pilgrimage every year. Confirmation is awaited.

57. The humour of the month was provided by the United States Minister in Angora, who planned a visit to Ibn Saud at Riyadh in the course of a trip to Muscat and back. The Minister reckoned without his host, who intimated politely that he was just off to the Hejaz, advanced the date of his departure, and then postponed it again, owing to urgent business, until the day on which he was originally understood to have intended to start. This adds a new formula to Ibn Saud's repertory of retorts courteous to gate-crashers in the interior of Arabia.

58. The Saudi Arab Government received a telegram from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Manchukuo on the occasion of the coronation of the new Emperor of that State and asked the advice of His Majesty's Government, through both this Legation and their Minister in London, as to the attitude they should adopt. They were informed in reply that the attitude of His Majesty's Government is determined by the resolution adopted by the Assembly of the League of Nations on the 24th February, 1933, under which members of the League were to continue not to accord recognition.

59. There is little else to record under this head except that the new Persian Minister held his first reception in Jedda on the 15th March, in honour of the Shah's birthday, and did it very well. Champagne flowed freely in that Moslem house, but the Governor of Jedda had first been polished off at a special reception.

### IV.—Miscellaneous.

60. H.M.S. *Penzance*, Commander R. H. Bevan, R.N., visited Jedda, as is usual at pilgrimage time, and stayed from the 22nd to the 29th March. She took part on the 26th March in the traditional regatta, now always held primarily for the pilgrimage fleet at Haj time. Although the tradition has been interrupted, the regatta is known to date from before 1860, when it used to be held on Queen Victoria's birthday.

61. Pilgrimage day fell on the 25th March. The assemblage was not quite as large as had latterly been hoped, principally because the last shipments from India fell short of expectations. The Saudi Government estimate the total number of people of all origins gathered at Arafat at 60,000. Fifty thousand is probably nearer the mark. The total number of overseas pilgrims, *i.e.*, those landed at Jedda and Yanbu, is officially put at 25,291. This total includes pilgrims embarked in India to the number of 9,937, among whom the number of British Indians was 7,012.

62. The arrangements for the pilgrimage worked normally. Health conditions were excellent. By the 31st March the Saudi Government declared the pilgrimage clean, and the Legation had satisfied itself that this verdict could be accepted provisionally, pending the examination of pilgrims returning northward at Tor.

63. Nine Moslem ratings of H.M.S. *Penzance* made the pilgrimage during her visit. Yet another Moslem Englishwoman attempted to follow the example given by Lady Evelyn Cobbold last year.<sup>(1)</sup> The usual number of oriental notables attended, including the Nigerian Amir of Muri, C.B.E., and one of India's brighter modern women. A party of Indian pilgrims from Delhi tried out the overland motor route travelling via Koweit and Riyadh. They arrived two days late. The King entertained some 600 guests at the banquet already mentioned in paragraph 50, but he did not find room for the Indian vice-consul.

64. Captain H. C. Armstrong's long-awaited book on Ibn Saud (paragraph 102 of the report for May 1933) appeared in London in March under the title *Lord of Arabia, Ibn Saud*. It does not yet seem to have reached Jedda. The reviewers at home seem to be more impressed by the pace of its staccato sentences than by its other qualities.

65. The *Umm-al-Qura* on the 2nd February and the 16th February published descriptions of an ancient manuscript entitled *History of Medina and its*

<sup>(1)</sup> But received permission too late to carry out her intention.



*Governors* which was recently unearthed in the Al-Mazhariyya Library of Medina and covered a period of some thirty years in the third century of the Hejira.

66. The position in regard to the manumission of slaves in March was as follows:—

On hand at the beginning of the month: 1 female.  
Took refuge in March: 2 males, 1 female, 1 child.  
Manumitted in March and repatriated: 1 male.  
Locally manumitted: Nil.  
On hand at the end of the month: 1 male, 2 females, 1 child.

[E 2535/79/25]

No. 42.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received April 24.)*

(No. 91.)

Sir,

Jedda, April 4, 1934.

WITHIN twenty-four hours of drafting my despatch No. 88 of the 31st March, regarding the Saudi-Yemen situation, I received an intimation that Sheikh Yusuf Yasin had been appointed Acting Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs. I gave you in my telegram No. 49 of the 2nd April the main points of our conversation when he paid me his first visit in his new capacity that morning.

2. I made very rough notes of the ten telegrams exchanged between the two rulers, following on telegrams from the King to the Imam announcing that he had ordered the heir apparent to advance. Although I am keeping a record of them here, I think it unnecessary to burden you with the details of this wordy correspondence. Its chief characteristic is the unrelenting firmness of the King in stating and restating his demands and refusing to be put off by any suggestion that he should stay his hand without obtaining complete satisfaction.

3. As for the demands themselves, there is little to add to the summary in my telegram No. 49 of the 2nd April, except that the King made a special point of the release of the hostages taken by the Imam in the Faifa-Beni Malik area. The King bases himself expressly on the agreement, which he says was come to by his delegates at Sana in 1927-28, and on the agreement of the 31st December regarding Arwa. He claims that by the former the Imam agreed to leave to him everything north of Waila, but offers for the sake of peace to agree to a neutralisation or partition of the Wadi Najran proper, as distinct from the area Badr-Hadada-Habuna, which he describes as being occupied by the Ikhwan. He repudiates a suggestion, apparently made by the Imam, that the Yemeni invasion of Najran was justified by correspondence subsequent to the Arwa settlement.

4. The statement that the Badr-Hadada-Habuna area is now held by Ibn Saud was new to me. I do not think I had previously heard of Hadada, which appears to be east of Badr. Sheikh Yusuf could not explain what had happened in this area. I surmise that the Ikhwan have held it since December, when it was admitted that certain of the King's sympathisers had joined forces with the local tribesmen, but denied that they were organised Saudi troops.

5. The King's telegrams emphasise and confirm his previous promise of pardon to the rebels in the Faifa-Beni Malik area.

6. In one of the earlier telegrams the Imam begged the King to beware of opening the door for foreign intrigue. The King, in his reply, said that he was alive to this danger, and took credit for having held his hand when he learned that the Imam was engaged in negotiations with His Majesty's Government. When reading these passages, Sheikh Yusuf said that the King had specially charged him to explain the references to the Anglo-Yemen negotiations in his speech of the 22nd March and in his correspondence with the Imam. They meant that he had wished at the time to avoid any appearance of putting pressure on the Imam not to conclude an agreement with His Majesty's Government.

7. In my comments at the end of the conversation I expressed gratification at the King's explanation, saying that I had noticed the expression "foreign intrigue." I developed in some detail the thesis that, whether people liked or

disliked the policy of His Majesty's Government, it was open and above board. Since the Great War they had sought to cultivate friendship with all Arab rulers in their respective spheres and to promote friendship among them. Their policy was entirely free from intrigue. I recalled once more the circumstances in which the British mission had been sent to Sana.

8. When urging that it might be prudent to avoid, if possible, any entry into admittedly Yemeni territory, I made it clear that I was not speaking in the interest of the Imam, but in that of Ibn Saud. I had heard, I said, not from a Yemeni but from a Saudi source that the Imam could put some 80,000 men in the field. If that were so, could the King tackle them? It had suited him not to treat the Imam's invasion of what he claimed as his territory as a *casus belli*. Would it suit him now to become involved in an open and declared war, which would be the greatest in Arabia since the Turks were driven out? Sheikh Yusuf insisted that the Imam's aggression must be met, and intimated that the Saudi Government feared a Yemeni attack on Sabya and Jizan. I admitted that this would produce a new situation.

9. I asked whether the King's reference in his speech to the failure of Moslem rulers, &c., to prompt reconciliation did not ignore the offer made some time ago by King Feisal. I was not, I explained, suggesting that King Feisal would have been the ideal mediator, but the offer had been made. Sheikh Yusuf first referred to telegrams received, after the King had ordered the heir apparent to advance, from the Chief Mufti of Palestine, King Ghazi, Prince Omar Toussoun, and at least one other. He intimated that, in the case of King Feisal, the Saudi Government had suspected some understanding between the King of Iraq and the Imam. They supposed that those who had approached the King had also approached the Imam, but they did not know what had passed. They themselves had neither sought nor rejected mediation, whether by King Feisal or anyone else. Sheikh Yusuf referred, when speaking of potential mediators, to the Moslem Conference of Jerusalem, a topic which I preferred not to pursue. In any case, Sheikh Yusuf clearly thought that the time for mediation had gone by. And, of course, it has, for the time being.

10. A rumour got about some little time ago that the King was detaining the Yemeni delegation at Abha. It was doubtless with reference to this that the King in his last telegram told the Imam that Abdullah-al-Wazir could do as he pleased: return to his master, stay at Abha or come to Mecca as an honoured guest. A more explicit denial of the detention rumour appeared in *Saut-al-Hijaz* of the 2nd April. The same paper announced that the King, not from necessity, but in deference to the patriotic wish of the people of the Hejaz and Nejd to take part in the war, had ordered the Emirs Feisal and Muhammad to take command of the forces from the Tihama and the reserves in Nejd respectively. The war is described in this paper as Jihad.

11. Mr. Philby came to see me on the 3rd April. He regards war to the knife as a foregone conclusion. He outlined a probable Saudi plan of campaign, which he has sent to the *Times*. Broadly speaking, he contemplates two main Saudi advances, east and west of the central ridge of mountains running from north to south between Tihamat Asir and Najran. The object of the eastern advance would be to cut communications with Najran and the mountains and to occupy Saada. The western advance would be aimed at Medi and Haradh. Mr. Philby talks merrily of the ease with which these movements would lead on to Sana and as far south as any desired point on the coast, *e.g.*, Hudeyda. He believes fervently in the success of Ibn Saud, and describes his imagined operations as though it were a question of a military promenade. He describes Baqim, or Baghim, which Sheikh Yusuf mentioned confidentially as the heir apparent's first objective, as being definitely in the Yemen.

12. I am sending copies of this despatch to Rome and Aden.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.



[E 2481/279/91]

No. 43.

*Mr. Rendel to Mr. Millard (United States Embassy).*

Dear Millard,

*Foreign Office, April 24, 1934.*

SINCE we arranged, as a result of your call upon me on the 3rd March, that the aircraft, which the California-Arabian Standard Oil Company are going to use for survey work over the area of their concession in Eastern Saudi Arabia, should in certain emergencies be allowed to fly from the Hasa coast to Bahrein, we have heard from our Embassy at Angora that your Embassy there have recently made informal enquiries regarding the treaty instruments governing the frontiers, &c., in that part of the world. We have instructed our Embassy to put yours on the track of the relevant agreements.

2. It has occurred to us that the enquiry of your Embassy at Angora may well have been made in connexion with the California-Arabian Standard Oil Company's concession and proposed aircraft survey. Whether that be so or not, it has suggested to us that, since we have been in correspondence on the subject of the company's aircraft, and you may not have had the opportunity of obtaining full information as to the boundary between Saudi Arabia and the area under British influence to the south-east of it, you may like to have the enclosed copies of two Anglo-Turkish conventions, of the 29th July, 1913, and the 9th March, 1914, respectively, which, *inter alia*, cover the matter.

3. The 1913 convention was never ratified, but you will see that the boundary line laid down in article 11 of it was redefined and formally adopted in article 3 of the 1914 convention, the ratifications of which were exchanged in London on the 3rd June of that year.

4. The frontier between Saudi Arabia and the British spheres of influence in South-Eastern Arabia is thus a line running from the head of the bay immediately to the south of Zaknuniya Island, a little to the east of Uqair, in a due southerly direction to a point on parallel 20° north in the middle of the Ruba-al-Khali desert, and thence running south-westwards, at an angle of 45 degrees, down to the frontier between the Aden Protectorate and what is now the territory of the Imam of the Yemen. King Ibn Saud has, of course, succeeded to Turkish sovereignty on the west and north-west of that line, Saudi Arabia being one of the Turkish succession States.

5. The prohibition in regard to flights of aircraft, to which we have already made reference in the official correspondence about the company's request for facilities for their aeroplane at Bahrein, applies, of course, to the area to the east and south-east of the above line; and, if you think there is any likelihood of the California-Arabian Standard Oil Company's survey of their concession (as to the precise area of which I understand no information has yet been published) extending to the vicinity of the boundary referred to above, we should be grateful if you would make sure that they are informed of the position, in order that there may be no danger of their aircraft unwittingly violating the prohibition of flying to the east of the boundary, or of their inadvertently extending their operations in any way to the east of that line.

Yours, &amp;c.

G. W. RENDEL.

[E 2600/2/25]

No. 44.

*Sir E. Drummond to Sir John Simon.—(Received April 26.)*

(No. 342.)

Sir,

*Rome, April 20, 1934.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 318 of the 5th April, I handed Signor Suvich to-day a letter of which a copy is enclosed, embodying the substance of the statement you instructed me to make to the Italian Government. I laid emphasis on the point that Signor Suvich would be able to obtain any additional information he desired during his forthcoming visit to London.

2. Signor Suvich stated that he could not regard the present hostilities very seriously. No doubt we should hear for some time to come of important victories on each side. At any rate the Italian Government were continuing to act in the spirit of the Rome conversations of 1927 and had yesterday sent a message to the Imam urging moderation and a settlement.

3. As regards the Asir question, the Italian view was and continued to be that it was desirable that Asir should be a small, and more or less independent, buffer State. I said to him that the reasons for which His Majesty's Government were unable to accept such a position were set out in the letter I had just handed to him, but I felt that the advice given by the Italian Government to the Imam would be much appreciated by my Government.

I have, &amp;c.

ERIC DRUMMOND.

Enclosure in No. 44.

*Sir E. Drummond to Signor Suvich.*

My dear Minister,

*April 19, 1934.*

I DID not fail to transmit to my Government your letter received in the Embassy on the 9th March, regarding the situation in South-West Arabia, and I have now received their comments. Briefly, these are to the effect that His Majesty's Government, though anxious as always to meet the wishes of the Italian Government, are unable to share their views as to the desirability of a conference between British and Italian experts at the present time.

If we may believe the rather confused reports of the last fortnight, hostilities between King Ibn Saud and the Imam of the Yemen have already broken out on a considerable scale. In the circumstances it would almost certainly be useless to hold a conference, the major object of which was to consider ways and means of arriving at a peaceful settlement of the dispute. There appear, therefore, to be no new joint steps which the two Governments could, as a result of such a conference, usefully take. They can only continue, as in the past, and in accordance with paragraph 2 of the Rome conversations of 1927, to urge moderation upon both sovereigns, should further opportunity arise.

Moreover, your letter under reference appeared to suggest that the Italian Government still considered the question of the sovereignty of Asir as open, and implied that, in regarding Asir as a rightful part of King Ibn Saud's dominions, His Majesty's Government were acting at variance with the spirit of the Rome conversations of 1927 and the declarations of the British representatives during those meetings. Since His Majesty's Government desire to act in complete frankness, I have now been instructed to explain to you in detail the reasons for their considered view that, quite apart from the outcome of the present hostilities, in international law the sovereignty over the territory ruled by the Idrisi has undoubtedly passed to King Ibn Saud (and cannot, therefore, be considered as an open question) and, at the same time, to endeavour to clear up the misunderstanding regarding the undertaking of His Majesty's Government to refrain from addressing to King Ibn Saud a formal communication of their recognition of his sovereignty over Asir. The position in international law appears to His Majesty's Government to be as follows:—

Prior to the conclusion of the Treaty of Mecca of 1926, the Idrisi was an independent ruler exercising sovereignty over certain territories in South-West Arabia. By the Treaty of Mecca, the Idrisi handed over to King Ibn Saud the entire control over his foreign relations, while retaining the government of the internal affairs of his country, apart from financial matters, which were also handed over to Ibn Saud. The result of the Treaty of Mecca was to establish a protectorate by Ibn Saud over the territories of the Idrisi as they existed at that date, and the Idrisi became unable, owing to the fact that he no longer possessed the control of foreign affairs, to alienate to any other Power any of his territories. As a result of the treaty of 1926 the Idrisi ceased to possess the status of an independent person under international law.

In 1930, as the result of negotiations which culminated in letters of the 10th October from the Idrisi and from his Council to King Ibn Saud, and as further defined in an arrangement contained in a report signed on the 16th November by representatives of King Ibn Saud and of the Idrisi, the Idrisi handed over to King Ibn Saud the internal government of his territory; and these arrangements were put into force by an order issued by King Ibn Saud on the 20th November, 1930, under which the Idrisi territory was governed by a direct representative, appointed by King Ibn Saud under the title of Emir, assisted by



an elected legislative council, the Idrisi merely retaining the nominal position of head of the Idrisi territory under Ibn Saud, with some powers of veto over the decisions of the Emir and the Legislative Council, subject to the final decision of King Ibn Saud. It appears to be perfectly clear that, as the result of the arrangements made in 1930, King Ibn Saud acquired full and complete sovereignty over the territories of the Idrisi, and that the form of government set up therein became merely part of the internal constitution of the territories of the Kingdom of the Hejaz and Nejd and its Dependencies as it was then called.

The territories over which King Ibn Saud thus acquired sovereignty were the same territories as those over which he had acquired a protectorate under the Treaty of Mecca of 1926, namely, all the territories which were under the sovereignty of the Idrisi, at the moment of the conclusion of the Treaty of Mecca. This appeared to His Majesty's Government at the time—and still appears to them—to have been the position at that date. They considered further that King Ibn Saud's sovereignty over these territories was effective in international law and did not require any express or implied recognition by any other Power to render it legally complete and effective.

It was on these grounds that His Majesty's Government (when the question was under discussion with the Italian Government in 1931 as a result of a request from the Hejaz-Nejd Government, which involved entering into correspondence with them on matters concerning Asir) decided that there could be no question of their declining to recognise the sovereignty of King Ibn Saud over Asir, but that, in deference to the wishes of the Italian Government, they could agree to refrain from sending to the Hejazi Government a formal communication of their recognition. The purport of this Embassy's note of the 24th July, 1931, appears, however, to have been misunderstood by the Italian Government, who seem to suggest in paragraph 5 of their note of the 23rd December last that the interpretation of the Embassy's note, which has now been given them, involves some degree of conflict with statements made by the British representatives during the conversations held in Rome in 1927 regarding affairs in the Red Sea and South-West Arabia. It was, indeed, precisely because there seemed some danger that the Italian Government might misunderstand the attitude which His Majesty's Government felt bound to adopt in 1931 in entering into correspondence with King Ibn Saud's Government over Asir, and thus recognising, by implication, his sovereignty over that territory, that they felt it desirable to explain the position to the Italian Government beforehand. They can only regret that the Italian Government appear to have failed to understand the attitude underlying the course proposed by His Majesty's Government in the Embassy's note of the 24th July, 1931, when they replied to their note of the 13th August, 1931, concurring therein.

In paragraph 3 of the Italian Government's undated note of December 1933, reference is made to the "well-known rights" of the Imam over Asir. His Majesty's Government know of no good grounds for any claim which the Imam may have put forward before the conclusion of the Treaty of Mecca to the area over which the Idrisi held sovereignty and they therefore could not agree to any discussion with the Italian Government on the basis that the Imam had a reasonable claim to that area at the present time.

I am, however, to add that His Majesty's Government will naturally continue, in pursuance of the conclusions of the Rome conversations of 1927, not only to refrain from intervention in the present conflict between King Ibn Saud and the Imam, but also to avoid all appearance of taking the part of either of the disputants, while seeking, should further opportunities arise, to use their influence in favour of a peaceful settlement. I am further to assure you of their desire to continue to exchange information with the Italian Government regarding the progress of the dispute. Should you wish for any further explanation in regard to any special point concerning the policy of His Majesty's Government in Arabian affairs, Sir John Simon will, of course, be happy to give it to you when you visit London at the end of the month.

Believe me, &c.  
ERIC DRUMMOND.

[E 723/723/91]

No. 45.

*Memorandum respecting the Boundaries in Arabia: Anglo-Turkish Arrangements.*

[WITH MAP.]

*Aden Protectorate.*

IN 1873 the Ottoman Government advanced a claim to sovereignty over the whole of the area that had at one time been in possession of the Imams of the Yemen, including tribal areas in South-West Arabia, with the rulers of which the British Government were in special treaty relations. The British Government, in reply, maintained that the rulers of these tribes were independent. There followed a period of frequent encroachments by Turkish authorities into the protectorate, of British representations and Turkish assurances, and of British measures to protect the tribes, until, in 1901, the Government of India and the Ottoman Government both proposed that the frontier should be demarcated. In 1902 frontier commissioners met and carried out demarcation on the ground. The results were embodied in three protocols of 1903, 1904 and 1905 respectively. Formal ratification was delayed until 1914, the agreement arrived at in 1905 being completed and ratified in the Anglo-Turkish Convention of the 9th March, 1914. The text will be found in C.P. 10517. Ratifications of this convention were exchanged at London on the 3rd June, 1914.

2. After the war, the Imam of the Yemen refused to recognise the frontier agreed upon in the 1914 convention, and revived the ancient claims of his predecessors. A situation similar to that in the last part of the 19th century subsequently prevailed, until a treaty was concluded with the Imam at Sanaa on the 11th February, 1934, which included a mutual undertaking providing for the maintenance of the situation in regard to the frontier as it existed on the date of signature of the treaty,<sup>(1)</sup> and for the prevention of any violation of this frontier pending negotiations for its final settlement. These negotiations are to be initiated before the expiration of the present treaty, which is to remain in force for forty years. This treaty has not yet been ratified.

*Persian Gulf Principalities.*

3. In March 1911 the Ottoman Government formally intimated to His Majesty's Government their wish that a precise definition might be reached as to the respective position of the two countries, commercially and politically, in the Persian Gulf, His Majesty's Government being concerned in view of their special treaty relations with the Arab rulers on the Arabian shores of the Persian Gulf. The ensuing negotiations resulted in the signature at London of the Anglo-Turkish Convention of the 29th July, 1913 (see C.P. 10515). This convention, *inter alia*, recognised Koweit as an autonomous Kaza of the Ottoman Empire, and established its boundaries, and contained Turkish renunciation of rights in Qatar. The boundary of the Ottoman Sanjak of Nejd was not delimited in detail, apart from where it marched with that of Koweit, but was described generally in the convention as a line commencing at a point on the Persian Gulf a little to the south of Uqair, opposite the Island of Zakhnuniyah, running due south into the Ruba-al-Khali desert, until it met parallel 20° N., after which it turned and continued in a south-westerly direction in a straight line to meet Lakmat-esh-Shub, the most easterly point reached in the delimitation of the Aden Protectorate boundary.

4. This convention was not ratified, but, with the exclusion of Turkey from the Arabian peninsula, His Majesty's Government have maintained that the frontiers of Turkey's successors, Ibn Saud and the Imam of the Yemen, should be confined within the limits of the former Ottoman Empire as defined in the conventions of 1913 and 1914. The question of the extent to which these

<sup>(1)</sup> One of the conditions attached by His Majesty's Government to their consent to the conclusion of the treaty was that certain portions of the territory of the Aden Protectorate which were still in Yemeni occupation should be evacuated. The British Resident at Aden reported that prior to signature of the treaty this condition had been fulfilled. His Majesty's Government have reserved their right to claim the district of Bubeiatein, which at present remains in the Imam's possession.



conventions could be invoked was examined in 1928, in connexion with the concession of the Turkish (now Iraq) Petroleum Company. In a Library memorandum of the 24th January, 1928 [E 330/94/65], it is stated:—

"It may be objected that, as the convention of the 29th July, 1913, was never ratified, and that, as the ratifications of the convention of the 9th March, 1914, were not exchanged until the 3rd June, 1914, neither of these documents can be invoked as evidence of the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire on the 19th March, 1914.

"An answer to that, so far as the Persian Gulf is concerned, would be that the negotiations of 1913 were instituted in order to provide for the maintenance of the territorial *status quo* and for the regularisation of a condition of affairs which had, in view of His Majesty's Government, already existed for many years.

"The attitude of successive British Governments had been that, prior to Midhat Pasha's expedition of 1871, there were on the Arabian coast no symbols of Turkish authority, no Turkish jurisdiction, effective or ineffective, south or east of Ojeir.<sup>(3)</sup> There was nothing in the history of Muscat, of the Trucial Coast, of Bahrein, or of El Katr, which reflected Ottoman predominance. On the other hand, Great Britain had repudiated Turkish claims to sovereignty over Bahrein eighteen times, and had frequently informed the Porte that the Ottoman claim to sovereignty over El Katr could not be, and never had been, recognised by Great Britain.

"The answer as regards the Aden Convention would seem to be that, although it was not ratified until the 3rd June, 1914, an arrangement was made for its enforcement pending ratification. Apart from this, however, for many years the attitude of His Majesty's Government had been that they did not acknowledge the title of the Porte to the country lying at or beyond the mouth of the Red Sea.

"As regards the Hadramaut, all the tribes had long been under British protection, and the leading sheikhs stipendiaries of the British Government.

"It is to be noted that, although Koweit was regarded by His Majesty's Government as an autonomous Kaza of the Turkish Empire, the Sheikh of Koweit had undertaken to grant an oil concession in his territory only to a nominee of the British Government. Koweit may therefore for present purposes be regarded as outside Turkish territory."

5. Since the war, with the exception of the frontier between Nejd and Koweit, which was defined in the Nejd-Koweit Agreement of the 2nd December, 1922, no definition has been reached in agreement with Ibn Saud of the eastern and south-eastern frontiers of Nejd. Library memorandum of the 17th October, 1927 [E 4330/104/65/1927], dealing with the frontier between Nejd and Qatar, contains the following paragraphs:—

"By article 11 of the (unratified) Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1913, the boundary between El Katr and Nejd was described as a line running from the extreme end of the gulf opposite the Island of Zakhnuniyah due south to Ruba-al-Khali (see blue line on map 2 attached to the convention of 1913).

"By article 6 of the treaty of the 26th December, 1915, between Great Britain and the Sultan of Nejd, the latter promised to refrain from all aggression on or interference with the territories of El Katr.

"During a visit which Sir Percy Cox, then High Commissioner at Bagdad, paid to Ibn Saud in November and December 1922, the question of the status of El Katr came under notice in connexion with a project for the grant of an oil concession for a tract of Nejd territory. Sir P. Cox, who found that in his discussions with the engineer representing the aspirant *cessionnaires* Ibn Saud had apparently included the Katr peninsula within the area for which he was prepared to negotiate a concession, at once took Ibn Saud to task, reminded him that he had nothing to do with El Katr except to respect it under the terms of the treaty of 1915, and insisted on the limitation of his discussions to the country west of the longitude of the head of Salwah Bay, i.e., the line laid down in the Anglo-Turkish Convention, 1913, and marked in blue on map 2 annexed thereto.

(3) That is south or east of the line dividing Nejd and El Katr.

"As Ibn Saud accepted this injunction without argument and nothing later appears to have transpired, it may reasonably be held that the line of 1913 still constitutes the frontier between El Katr and Nejd."

6. In February 1934 a despatch was received from His Majesty's Ambassador at Angora [E 1206/1206/91/1934] reporting the receipt of a request from the United States Embassy for a copy of the "Anglo-Turkish Treaty of the 29th July, 1913, which delimited the frontiers between Aden and the Ottoman dominions and between Muscat and the Ottoman dominions." It was assumed in the Foreign Office that this request was connected with the operation of the Hasa Oil Concession by the California Arabian Standard Oil Company, and it was held to be desirable that the position of His Majesty's Government with regard to the boundaries mentioned should be made clear to the United States Government, and that the United States Embassy at Angora should be put in possession of all the relevant treaty texts. After consultation with the India Office, a despatch was sent to His Majesty's Ambassador at Angora on the 22nd March, 1934 [E 1839/1206/91/1934], instructing Sir P. Loraine to communicate a copy of the 1913 convention to the United States Embassy, and to show them a copy of the 1914 convention, which, unlike the 1913 convention, had been published. In this despatch the view was definitely taken that the fact that certain territories on the Ottoman side of the 1913-14 line had now become independent States, could not be regarded in the view of His Majesty's Government as in any way affecting the status of the territories on the other side of that line, which His Majesty's Government regarded as forming the boundary between the Ottoman Succession State of Saudi Arabia and the territories of South-Eastern Arabia with which they were in special relations. Sir P. Loraine was instructed to call the attention of the United States Embassy to the fact that the 1913 convention was not ratified, but to point out to them, in support of the view taken by His Majesty's Government of the validity of the line laid down therein, that that line was mentioned, adequately defined and definitely adopted in article 3 of the 1914 convention, which had been ratified.

7. One point arising out of the question of the 1913-14 frontier line is whether that line should be regarded as merely establishing the limits of Saudi Arabian territory or whether it also lays down the boundaries of the territories of Arab rulers with whom His Majesty's Government are in special treaty relations. After Mr. Philby's expedition into the Ruba-al-Khali in 1932, the Saudi Arabian paper, the *Umm-al-Qura*, in publishing an account of the expedition, advanced a claim to Saudi Arabian sovereignty over the districts visited. The Foreign Office then decided not to take the initiative in examining questions of territorial claims in the Ruba-al-Khali. The question of the territorial limits of Qatar has, however, arisen in connexion with the operation of the Hasa Oil Concession (see paragraph 6 above). Lieutenant-Colonel Dickson, Political Agent at Koweit, who was present with Sir Percy Cox at the Uqair negotiations with Ibn Saud in November and December of 1922 already referred to, has furnished a report [E 279/279/91/1934] on the discussions which then took place regarding the Nejd-Qatar boundary. According to this report, Ibn Saud produced Hunter's map of Arabia 1-inch to 32 miles, on which was marked in blue pencil the area which he proposed to grant to the Eastern and General Syndicate for their concession. This area included the whole of the Hasa Province and the Qatar peninsula, the south-western and southern boundary of the concession being marked by a line drawn down the Wadi Faruq as far as Jaw-ad-Dukhan and then turning east from there to Khor-adh-Dhuwaih on the coast. Sir Percy Cox marked in red pencil on the map a line from Jaw-ad-Dukhan to Dohat Salwa, saying to Ibn Saud: "That is the line," and crossed out the incorrect line marked in blue. It will be noticed that the line marked by Sir P. Cox was not in accordance with that laid down in the 1913 convention. As it was not clear whether Sir P. Cox intended to indicate the frontier between Nejd and Qatar or whether he was merely warning Ibn Saud against assuming sovereignty east of the red line on the map, and as Lieutenant-Colonel Dickson's report (written more than ten years after the event) contained nothing to show that mention was made of the 1913 convention line, it was considered desirable to consult Sir P. Cox on the subject. In a discussion held at the India Office on the 20th February, 1934 [E 1302/279/91/1934], Sir P. Cox expressed his conviction that the 1913 convention line was never mentioned during the 1922 discussions with Ibn Saud, and



expressed the opinion that any view then expressed by him incidentally and extempore could not reasonably be regarded as an official pronouncement of the Hasa-Qatar boundary; he added that in any case he had informed Ibn Saud that His Majesty's Government should be consulted before any concession was granted.

8. No decision has yet been reached regarding the status of the territory immediately to the east of the 1913 convention line, but the despatch to Sir P. Loraine mentioned in paragraph 6 above contained a warning as to the position, and instructed him, should it be found necessary to give the United States Embassy any oral explanations on the matter, to avoid referring to this territory as specifically forming part of the State of Qatar itself, but to refer to it merely as being under British influence.

9. In a despatch of the 11th April, Sir P. Loraine reported that he had spoken to the United States Ambassador on the 2nd April in the sense of the instructions summarised in paragraph 6 of this memorandum [E 2435/1206/91/1934], but that he had not found it necessary to refer to Qatar. The United States Embassy in London were also similarly informed on the 24th April of the position as regards the frontiers laid down in the Anglo-Turkish Conventions of 1913 and 1914, copies of which were sent to them [E 2481/279/91/1934]; here again no specific reference was made to Qatar, the phrase used being "the frontier between Saudi Arabia and the British spheres of influence in South-Eastern Arabia." This action was taken in order that the position might be made clear to the Standard Oil Company of California, who were carrying out aerial surveys which His Majesty's Government feared might otherwise be extended over the frontier laid down in the convention of 1913. In addition, instructions were sent to His Majesty's Minister at Jedda on the 21st April [E 2481/279/91/1934] to address a formal note to the Saudi Arabian Government, informing them of the request of the United States Embassy at Angora, and of the action taken, enclosing copies of the conventions of 1913 and 1914, and explaining the view of His Majesty's Government as to the validity of the frontiers laid down therein. This explanation was to be on the lines laid down in the despatch to Sir P. Loraine summarised in paragraph 6 of this memorandum, Sir A. Ryan's attention also being called to the position as regards Qatar. Sir A. Ryan addressed a note accordingly to the Saudi Arabian Government on the 28th April [E 2662/279/91/1934]. In this note, with the concurrence of the Foreign Office, he used the expression "for convenience of reference" in communicating copies of the conventions of 1913 and 1914, in order to indicate the assumption that the Saudi Arabian Government already had knowledge of both.

10. An explanatory map is annexed.

HUGH K. GREY.

Foreign Office, April 30, 1934.

[E 2746/79/25]

No. 46.

Sir John Simon to Sir E. Drummond (Rome).

(No. 121.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, May 2, 1934.

FOLLOWING is repetition of Aden telegram No. 42 of 2nd May to Colonial Office. Repeated to India, Jedda, and senior naval officer, Red Sea:—

"Kamran reports that Yemeni troops have withdrawn from all ports on the mainland near Kamran, including Salif, and that local tribes are going over to Saudi as the latter advances southwards. About 200 refugees have now arrived at Kamran, stating that Yemenis have also evacuated Hodeida, which is left without a Government.

"Private property reported still safe yesterday, but there is fear of looting. There are a considerable number of British subjects at Hodeida, and H.M.S. *Penzance* has gone there to give them assistance if necessary. They are mostly Indians."

[E 2746/79/25]

No. 47.

Sir John Simon to Sir E. Drummond (Rome).

(No. 122.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, May 2, 1934.

MY immediately preceding telegram.

Following is repetition, for your own confidential information of telegram from commander of His Majesty's sloop *Penzance* at Hodeida, addressed to Aden, No. J.5; repeated to Admiralty and Jedda; despatched at 8.50 A.M. on 2nd May:—

"Have not yet landed, as town was quiet during night, but situation increasingly critical owing gathering of armed tribesmen on the outskirts. Evacuation of British subjects, numbering about 300, cannot at present be attempted as the inhabitants regard their presence as guarantee of British and European intervention, and would certainly prevent it. Consider it most urgent that strong air demonstration should be made to-day over town and neighbourhood, and that troops from Aden should be sent immediately. Presence of other warship[s] would have an excellent effect. Propose immediate request to Italian authority. Townsmen would welcome arrival of Saudi forces."

(Repeated to India, No. 19.)

[E 2746/79/25]

No. 48.

Sir John Simon to Sir E. Drummond (Rome).

(No. 123.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, May 2, 1934.

MY immediately preceding telegram, repeating telegram No. J.5 of 2nd May from commander, *Penzance*, to Aden.

1. *Evening Standard* have received telegraphic report from correspondent in Hodeida to effect that Imam is dead, and that heir apparent has fled the country. Messrs. Gellatly, Hankey have received similar report from Hodeida through their branch at Port Sudan. If true, this report may account for critical situation which seems to have developed at Hodeida.

2. Immediate objective of His Majesty's Government must clearly be to secure safety of colony of approximately 300 British Indians in Hodeida. They are therefore prepared to agree to any measures which British naval authorities and Chief Commissioner at Aden consider essential for this end; proposed air demonstration is being authorised, and instructions are being sent to His Majesty's ships *Enterprise* and *Hastings*, which are only other British warships available, to join *Penzance* at Hodeida as soon as possible. *Enterprise* should arrive about 6th May, and *Hastings* about 8th May. As regards proposed despatch of troops from Aden, for your confidential information, there are no suitable troops available, and in any case landing of any foreign ground forces might lead to even greater difficulties, particularly if Saudi troops should arrive on the scene.

3. As regards proposal of commander of *Penzance* that Italian authorities should immediately be asked to send ship, His Majesty's Government understand that Italians probably have two small ships available in Eritrean ports, which could reach Hodeida within one or two days. On general political grounds, however, His Majesty's Government are not anxious to encourage Italian intervention. In any case, Italian ships appear to be too small to be able to give much material assistance.

4. It is, however, important that the Italian Government should be informed without delay of situation which has arisen, of presence of *Penzance* at Hodeida, and of measures, such as despatch of warships and air demonstration from Aden, which are being taken. You should inform them accordingly.

[10923]

H 2



5. Please telegraph whether Italian Government have any similar or further information regarding situation, and, if so, what, if any, action they contemplate.

6. Please repeat your reply to Jedda, Aden and India.

(Repeated to Jedda, No. 61; Aden; India, No. 20; Commander-in-chief, Mediterranean; Senior Naval Officer, Red Sea sloops; and commander, H.M.S. *Penzance*.)

[E 2749/79/25]

No. 49.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 3.)*

(No. 87.)

(Telegraphic.)

*Jedda, May 2, 1934.*

TELEGRAMS from H.M.S. *Penzance*, repeated to me as J.4 and J.5.

I informed Fuad this morning orally, and as a matter of courtesy, of news regarding Hodeida and H.M.S. *Penzance* going there.

Fuad informed me later that Amir Feisal was proceeding to Hodeida with all speed, and would install Saudi Administration, perhaps to-morrow.

Despatch of British troops, unless essential, may create complications, and I doubt wisdom of concerted naval action with Italians. Air demonstration seems less open to objection if it would suffice to overawe the tribes.

(Repeated to Aden, No. 82, for self and navy.)

[E 2764/546/25]

No. 50.

(Confidential.)

*Brief Notes by Mr. Calvert on a Short Tour of the Southern Frontier of Transjordan, with the Officer Commanding Arab Legion, February 20-March 1, 1934.—(Received in Foreign Office, May 3.)*

*Route followed on Tour.*

AMMAN - Katrani - Bair - Jaffar - Maan - Aqaba - Rum - Mudawwera - Jebel Tubaik (two days) - Imshash and from Imshash by air (Royal Air Force) back to Amman, via the eastern frontier (with the Wadi Sirhan at first a whitish blur on the horizon, later nearer as it approaches the frontier) - Hazim and Qasr Azraq.

*General Conditions.*

At the time the tour was undertaken the frontiers had remained peaceful for some months past. There were no raids of very recent memory to recount and the tribes were quiet. It was understood both from the British Resident, Colonel Cox and Captain Glubb that instances had recently occurred of seduction of Transjordan tribal leaders by Saudi frontier authorities, that the matter was considerably exercising the minds of the authorities in Amman, and that written representations were being made on the subject.

The visit also took place at a time of the year when the tribes, for the most part, were still beyond the frontier in Saudi Arabia, although at the end of February they were on their way west anticipating good grazing in the Kerak and Tafileh districts. In consequence, very few tents were to be seen save where, in the neighbourhood of police posts, a few Bedouin subsisted, in part at least, on the charity of the Arab Legion.

The normal poverty of the nomad has been intensified by the cumulative effect of three years of drought. Flocks and herds have been decimated, and the present plight of the Bedouin is a serious one indeed. Certain relief measures have been organised by the Transjordan Government, e.g., work on roads in the vicinity of Amman, but, although these may serve in some degree to alleviate distress amongst the local semi-sedentarised tribes, they fail to help the Bedouin. It will be noted later that there has been a marked tendency for Huwaitat to settle as agriculturalists in the neighbourhood of Maan.

Fortunately, this year the rains had been fairly satisfactory up to the end of February, particularly in the area west of the Hejaz Railway and further north, the only exception being the Jebel Tubaik region, where no rain has fallen for four years.

*Jebel Tubaik.*

The survey of the frontier in this area was about to commence at the time I travelled from Aqaba via Rum and Mudawwera into the Jebel Tubaik. The survey party assembled at Maan, I gathered later, about the 22nd February, but I did not meet them. I am, at the time of writing, unaware of the results of the survey, but I venture to submit the following observations, as they involve, I believe, considerations of material importance, whatever may, in fact, be the result of the survey.

The Jebel Tubaik is a mountainous block, presenting steep escarpments to the east, south-east and south, and mountain ranges, with valleys guarded by formidable sand-dunes, at its other aspects. As the mountains, or hills (for nowhere do they appear to attain great height), are almost all of practically the same altitude, and, as many of their summits are small tablelands, it would seem reasonable to suppose that in early geological times this massif was one large elevated plateau, which has since suffered drastically from erosion by wind and rain.

For long, this area was regarded by the British authorities in Transjordan as impenetrable. Until recently it remained *terra incognita*, as no wheeled transport ventured to enter the treacherously-sandy bottoms of its labyrinthine valleys. The armed cars (Chevrolet trucks) of the Arab Legion have now traversed the region several times, but the occasion on which I accompanied them was the first attempt by Captain Glubb to take his Ford car through this difficult and bewildering country. We spent two days in the Jebel, and in places only progressed by dint of considerable labour in the making of a track.

This region, so inhospitable to the agents of the Administration, has, however, in the past proved an almost perfect sanctuary to the raiding Bedouin escaping from the consequences of their crimes. Once within the shelter of the sand-dunes they could snap their fingers at the pursuing police, who could, it is true, maintain a patrol on the desert track running along the foot of the southern and eastern scarps, just within the frontier, and perhaps a cordon on the other sides, but who could not enter the Jebel except on foot or by camel. Now this difficult country is being opened up and it will no longer, it may be hoped, serve to harbour, so conveniently near to the Saudi frontier, fugitives from justice in Transjordan.

It is, therefore, of great importance that this area should remain under the control (and, as it is proving, the increasingly effective control) of one authority. Should the survey confirm the Jebel Tubaik area to Transjordan, well and good. Should, however, the survey indicate some new alignment which would intersect this area, in my opinion there is still very good reason to insist, should the necessity ever arise, in spite of the survey, that the Jebel Tubaik in its entirety should remain in Transjordan. If the area were transferred, in part or wholly, to Saudi Arabia, it is not unreasonable to assume that, lacking as the Saudi authorities do the powerful mobile organisation adequately equipped (an expensive matter!) to police the area, it would at once revert to its former character of refuge for the evil-doer and fertile source of trouble on this frontier.

It is my intention to limit myself to this aspect of the question of the relation of the Jebel Tubaik to the frontier alignment. The peace of the frontier at this point is intimately concerned, and it seems not too far-fetched a thesis that the interests of Saudi Arabia itself would be ill-served by any realignment which would radically disturb the present situation.

*Liaison between Frontier Officers.*

At the time of my visit there had been no meeting between the officer commanding the Arab Legion and the Governors of Tebuk and the Qariyat. Captain Glubb was anxious that meetings should take place, and informed me that he had sent an invitation to Abdullah Sdayri, Governor of Tebuk, to be his guest at Mudawwera. To this the Governor had replied regretting his inability to accept the invitation, but suggesting a meeting should take place on the



frontier at a point some 2 miles south of Mudawwera. This meeting had not taken place at the end of February, but it was understood from Captain Glubb that he hoped to meet his opposite number very shortly. Captain Glubb regretted that he was no longer to meet Ibn Zaid, of whom he spoke in very friendly terms.

#### *Tribal Personages.*

Amongst desert personages encountered during the tour were the following:—

- Muhammad Abu Taiyyer, son of the old warrior, now dead, Auda Abu Taiyyer.
- Auda Atna of the Atun—a Huwaitat chieftain, famous in his younger days as a raider of great daring, upon whose head the Transjordan Government at one time put a price of £100.
- Mutair Ibn Hermas, a leading sheikh of the Beni Atiyeh.

#### *Trade.*

The streams of trade crossing the Saudi-Transjordan frontiers, either as transit trade with Syria or as direct trade with Transjordan, are exiguous in the extreme. Never have they been of much consequence, but of recent years, due to world economic depression and more particularly to the local factor of exceptional droughts extending over several years, these streams have been reduced to the merest trickle. There are no customs posts along these frontiers. If there were, it would be a matter of great difficulty to control the movement of caravans, except perhaps in summer when they would be obliged to keep to the wells. In the Hadda Treaty (or annexed letters) Ibn Saud secured the freedom of movement for Nejd merchants to and from Syria, and provision for the canalisation of trade along certain routes was also included in the treaty, but this, I understand, has not been since observed.

The chief source of wealth of the Bedouin in the past has been the sale of camels, bred principally for the Egyptian market, where, in addition to their use as transport animals, their flesh was very largely consumed by the lower classes. Dealers from Egypt, Syria, Bagdad and other surrounding centres were wont to keep their agents moving with the tribes during the season, the tribes enjoying the best grazing being those most readily selected by the dealers. It may be remarked that good or bad grazing might cause a difference in the price realised by camels of as much as 60 per cent., as not only would a well-fed camel yield more meat, but would also yield, upon the flesh being boiled down, a much larger amount of fat.

The proceeds of the sale of camels were usually spent by the tribes in the purchase of grain and other stores, clothing and simple luxuries, in the bazaars and "suqs" of the Jebel Druse, Amman, Maan and Kerak.

The principal export of Saudi Arabia to Transjordan and Syria by way of these frontiers, apart from the camel and other animals, is "saman" or animal oil, used principally for cooking. The proceeds of the sale of "saman" are similarly invested by the Bedouin in stores, both necessities and luxuries, purchased in Syria and Transjordan. Of the tribes moving, in the course of their seasonal migrations, between Syria and Saudi Arabia, the Ruwalla are the most important. Penetrating, as they do, very far into Nejd, they constitute to some extent the agency by which a considerable volume of this transit trade passes.

The former modest dimensions of such commercial exchanges have shrunk, as already indicated, to a pathetically little measure in recent years. Not only has drought ravaged the flocks and destroyed the pastures, but the Egyptian demand for camels has diminished considerably. In part this may be explained by the substitution of modern transport for the immemorial transport camel; and in part, as far as the consumption of camel-meat is concerned, by a change in the tastes of the Egyptian public. The effect, nevertheless, is a disaster to the economy of the tribes of Arabia.

The severity of the times is so sorely felt that the Transjordan Government's scheme for settling the Huwaitat as agriculturalists in the Maan district is meeting with considerable success. The movement is helped by the stimulus to agricultural development of the western non-desert areas of Transjordan provided by the proximity of a market for Transjordan produce in Palestine. Although economically Transjordan looks naturally towards Palestine, yet a certain trade in cereals and other produce from the settled areas immediately east of the Jordan valley is carried on with adjoining parts of Saudi Arabia.

#### *Arms.*

The tribes of Transjordan are chiefly armed with Turkish and German (Mauser) rifles. There are a few—but very few—Short Lee Enfield .303 rifles held.

#### *His Highness the Amir Abdullah.*

I had the honour of being received by His Highness the Amir Abdullah on the 28th February, being presented by Colonel Cox. His Highness enquired after the healths of Ibn Saud and Sir Andrew Ryan. For the rest, he discoursed amiably on such sober topics as the water supply of Jeddah and schools in the Hejaz.

A. S. C.

April 27, 1934.

[E 2784/79/25]

No. 51.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 3.)*

No. 91.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Jedda, May 3, 1934.

YOUR telegram No. 123 to Rome.

I am still without definite confirmation of report of Imam's death.

Saudi Government have to-day addressed circular to foreign missions. It announces:—

- (1) Occupation of Luhaiya on the 1st May and despatch of urgent instructions for occupation of Hodeida.
- (2) Assumption of responsibility for administration of districts already completely occupied, and intention to assume similar responsibility in districts which will be occupied shortly.
- (3) Determination to give justice, reassurance and security to all alike, and to do the utmost for the safety of foreigners, to whom facilities and assistance will be given.
- (4) Advance of Feisal's forces to take charge at Hodeida at the earliest opportunity.

Saudi troops ought to reach Hodeida at any moment.

(Repeated to Aden, No. 85.)

[E 2773/79/25]

No. 52.

*Sir John Simon to Sir A. Ryan (Jedda).*

(No. 64.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, May 3, 1934.

ADEN telegram No. 46 to Colonial Office of 2nd May: Situation at Hodeida.

You will have seen from my telegram No. 123 of 2nd May to Rome that His Majesty's Government have decided not to invite Italian naval co-operation.

Unless you see objection, you should now inform Saudi Government that, while owing to collapse of Yemeni authority at Hodeida, His Majesty's Government have taken the measures they consider necessary to ensure the safety of British lives and property pending the arrival of Saudi forces, they rely on assurance recently given by Saudi Government that Saudi military authorities will be responsible for protection of these as soon as they occupy the town. His Majesty's Government therefore request that arrangements to that effect may be made by officer commanding Saudi forces with H.M.S. *Penzance* at earliest possible opportunity, if this has not already been done.

(Repeated to Aden; India, No. 21; Commander-in-chief, Mediterranean; senior naval officer, Red Sea sloops; commander H.M.S. *Penzance*.)



[E 2787/79/25]

No. 53.

*Sir E. Drummond to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 4.)*

(No. 122.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Rome, May 3, 1934.

YOUR telegram No. 123.

Only information which has so far reached here is that Hodeida has been evacuated by Yemeni forces. Order has been sent to Italian sloop at Massowa to proceed to Hodeida at once. Press telegrams from London published in this evening's papers here reproduce rumours referred to in first paragraph of your telegram under reference and substance of first paragraph of your telegram No. 121. No other news has appeared.

(Repeated to Jedda, Aden and India.)

[E 2857/79/25]

No. 54.

*Sir E. Drummond to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 5.)*

(No. 126.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Rome, May 4, 1934.

MY telegram No. 122.

Italian Government now inform me that in order to protect Italian subjects and interests three small men-of-war have been ordered to proceed to Hodeida, of which one has already arrived. They will keep us posted with latest information and ask that we should do the same by them.

(Repeated to Jedda, Aden and India.)

[E 2853/79/25]

No. 55.

*Sir John Simon to Sir E. Drummond (Rome).*

(No. 130.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, May 5, 1934.

H.M.S. *Penzance* reports that Italian warship *Ostia* is proceeding from Massowa with 400 Italian native troops, which Italians propose to land at Hodeida "in response to request from Iman of Yemen that they should take measures for protection of European nationals at Hodeida."

His Majesty's Government believe there to be practically no European residents at Hodeida, though there are a considerable number of British Indians and other foreign orientals who are already being taken care of.

To land anything like the number of troops now intended could hardly be regarded as otherwise than intervention, from which our two Governments undertook to abstain in paragraph 3 of the conclusions of the Rome conversations of 1927, and would tend to make the position of any Europeans still in Hodeida yet more, instead of less, dangerous and thus defeat the very object which the expedition professes to have in view. His Majesty's Government hope, therefore, most earnestly that the Italian Government will telegraph urgent instructions to their local authorities to abstain from this step, which appears to His Majesty's Government dangerously ill-advised, especially as Ibn Saud has already given guarantees about the behaviour of his troops on arrival at Hodeida.

You should make representations to Italian Government immediately in above sense and avail yourself of the opportunity to explain to them the action taken by His Majesty's Government as recorded in my telegram No. 66 to Sir A. Ryan of 4th May.

You should report Italian reply at once.

(Repeated to Jedda, No. 67, and Aden, No. 45.)

[E 2854/79/25]

No. 56.

*Sir John Simon to Sir E. Drummond (Rome).*

[By Telephone.]

(No. 131.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, May 5, 1934.

MY telegram No. 130 of 5th May: Saudi-Yemeni conflict, last sentence.

Please cancel words "the action taken by His Majesty's Government as recorded in my telegram No. 66 to Sir A. Ryan" and substitute "that His Majesty's Government are urgently considering what further measures, if any, they can take to help to bring about re-establishment of peace."

(Repeated to Jedda, No. 68, and Aden, No. 46.)

[E 2869/79/25]

No. 57.

*Sir E. Drummond to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 6.)*

(No. 128.)

(Telegraphic.)

Rome, May 5, 1934.

SIGNOR SUVICH informs me that *Ostia* has on board only some fifty men, and that she is destined for Moka, where there is an Italian hospital and agency. He understands that some ten or so men have been disembarked at Hodeida from Azio, but his information is that we have also disembarked a few men for the purpose of keeping order. He added that instructions had been given to local authorities to keep in contact with air officers. Imam had told Italian Government that he could not be responsible for lives and property of Europeans at Hodeida, and it was with a view to being prepared for any emergency that ships and some troops were despatched.

Italian Government will not, however, disembark more men than are strictly necessary for this purpose. They felt that as they could not send aeroplanes the measures taken were required.

Signor Suvich stated categorically that we should have no cause for alarm.

He believed that Saudi forces had not yet reached the town, but he observed that exact information, owing to difficulties of communications, was very difficult to obtain. I should be grateful if I could keep Italian Government informed of any local developments (see telegram from Cairo in the *Continental Daily Mail* of 4th May).

(Repeated to Jedda, No. 3.)

[E 2883/79/25]

No. 58.

*Sir John Simon to Sir A. Ryan (Jedda).*

(No. 73.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, May 7, 1934.

FOLLOWING from Oliphant:—

"Captain of *Penzance* appears to have established very good relations with Emir Feisal. But for service reasons and because of sickness on board, it is necessary for *Penzance* to proceed to Aden, and H.M.S. *Enterprise* will replace her. Captain of *Penzance* is about to inform Emir accordingly, and the two ships will not be in company at Hodeida for more than a few hours. *Enterprise* is a far bigger ship, but her use is not due to any minatory desire on our part. If you think it desirable you may explain this to Saudi Government, as we have no wish to lead them to think that we mistrust their assurances.

"Between ourselves, we wish to damp down the whole matter as far as possible, and to withdraw even *Enterprise* as soon as general situation including attitude of Italians permits."



[E 2932/79/25]

No. 59.

*Sir E. Drummond to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 8.)*

(No. 383.)

HIS Majesty's representative at Rome presents his compliments to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit herewith copy of a *note verbale* to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Rome, dated the 30th April, 1934, respecting the South-West Arabian dispute.

*Rome, May 2, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 59.

*Note verbale.*

HIS Majesty's Embassy present their compliments to the Royal Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and have the honour to inform them that they did not fail to communicate to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom the substance of the Royal Ministry's *note verbale* of the 25th April on the subject of the present situation in South-Western Arabia.

As the Royal Italian Government will be aware, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have, throughout the course of the present dispute between King Ibn Saud and the Imam of Yemen, constantly urged on King Ibn Saud the extreme desirability of arriving at a peaceful settlement of the questions at issue. In particular, when, at the beginning of the present year, an outbreak of hostilities unfortunately appeared imminent, His Majesty's Minister at Jedda was instructed on the 23rd January to address to the Saudi Minister for Foreign Affairs the personal letter, the substance of which was communicated to the Royal Ministry for Foreign Affairs in His Majesty's Ambassador's personal letter of the 24th January to his Excellency the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Similarly, on the 22nd March, His Majesty's Minister at Jedda made to a representative of the Saudi Minister for Foreign Affairs a personal communication, the tenor of which was subsequently approved by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, expressing the earnest hope that it would be possible to avoid the crossing of the frontier by Saudi troops: the substance of this communication was given in the *note verbale* from this Embassy No. 99 of the 29th March.

While His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom will, in the future as on these and other occasions in the past, be most ready to use their influence with King Ibn Saud whenever it appears to them that by so doing they are likely to contribute to the cause of peace, they fear that where the rights and wrongs of the position are as obscure as they are at the present moment, intervention by them at this stage might well do more harm than good. His Majesty's Government will, however, certainly exert their influence on behalf of peace as soon as a suitable opportunity occurs.

*Rome, April 30, 1934.*

[E 2933/79/25]

No. 60.

*Sir E. Drummond to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 8.)*

(No. 394.)

HIS Majesty's representative at Rome presents his compliments to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit herewith copy of a *note verbale* from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Rome, dated the 3rd May, 1934, respecting hostilities in South-West Arabia, and urges renewal of British persuasions *vis-à-vis* the Saudi Government.

*Rome, May 4, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 60.

*Note verbale.*

(Translation.)

IN their *note verbale* of the 30th April, replying to the request of the Royal Ministry for Foreign Affairs for immediate British intervention with the Government of Jedda with a view to procuring the suspension of hostilities by King Ibn Saud, His Britannic Majesty's Embassy stated—after recalling various other recent occasions on which British influence had been exercised at Jedda—that the Government of London feared that “where the rights and wrongs of the position are as obscure as they are at the present moment, intervention at this stage might well do more harm than good.”

In regard to the above, the Royal Ministry for Foreign Affairs have the honour to make the following observations, viz., that apart from the discussions as to the rights and wrongs, the situation is clear in this respect, that the Imam has declared his acceptance of all the conditions imposed by Ibn Saud for desisting from armed action, and that in spite of this the advance of Saudi troops into Yemeni territory continues and the tribes of the Yemeni-Tihama are stirred up against the Imam. The result of this has been that Hodeida has recently been evacuated by the Yemeni troops. We are thus face to face with events which may upset the existing political equilibrium on the eastern coast of the Red Sea, which was the subject of the Rome conversations of 1927 between Italy and Great Britain. If events are allowed to take their course without interference, the interests which these conversations were designed to protect may be compromised. The Royal Government for their part cannot therefore but regard with anxiety the creation of a fresh situation distinct from that which was the basis of the Italo-British agreements embodied in the protocol of the Rome conversations of 1927. It was in the light of such considerations that the Royal Government considered it desirable and urgent that the work of persuasion *vis-à-vis* the Government of Ibn Saud should not be interrupted, but rather intensified (the Italian Government for their part have not failed to act in this sense *vis-à-vis* the Imam) in order that nothing might be neglected which might prevent the situation in the Arabian peninsula from becoming more serious.

The Royal Ministry for Foreign Affairs are confident that His Majesty's Embassy will appreciate the friendly spirit of the present communication, which is inspired by the desire to continue the cordial Italo-British collaboration established in 1927, with the object of preserving peace in the Arabian peninsula and of safeguarding the important interests possessed by Italy and Great Britain on the eastern coast of the Red Sea.

*Rome, May 3, 1934 (XII).*

[E 2929/79/25]

No. 61.

*H.M.S. Penzance to Admiralty.**May 8, 1934.*

(Telegraphic.)

AT 7 A.M. 7th May Italian force of about sixty landed, object of replacing present naval landing-party of thirty-five.

Saudi official refused permission for them to leave pier.

Italian senior naval officer landed to explain and was received by advisers representing Amir Feisal.

Understand that Saudi delegate expressed surprise at the unannounced landing, and concern at the anxiety it would cause in the town.

He emphasised full guarantees already for the safety of foreign subjects, and quoted peaceful state of the town as evidence of the efficiency of the Saudi control.

Permission to proceed was still withheld, and the Italians re-embarked. I was notified in writing of the intention to effect the exchange after the landing



had taken place, and thus had no opportunity of following the direction in Admiralty message 2245, 5th May.

I at once called on the Italian senior naval officer, who stated relief was by order of the Asmara. Increase in strength was due to military organisation. I expressed my grave concern in the incident, to which the only reply was that the action was under definite instructions had been received.

I consider very early withdrawal of the British party and departure of H.M.S. *Penzance* increasingly desirable, and am ready to leave at short notice.

Am informed that as soon as British post is withdrawn the Italians will be requested to leave immediately.

[E 2869/79/25]

No. 62.

*Sir John Simon to Sir E. Drummond (Rome).*

(No. 145. Immediate.)

(Telegraphic.)

*Foreign Office, May 8, 1934.*

YOUR telegram No. 128 of 6th May: Saudi-Yemeni conflict; Hodeida.

You will have seen from telegrams from commander of *Penzance*, repeated to you, that Saudi military authorities have now assumed control at Hodeida, and offered guarantees for protection of all foreign life and property. His Majesty's Government regard these guarantees as satisfactory. Meanwhile, it has become desirable, for service reasons and owing to sickness on board, to send H.M.S. *Penzance* back to Aden, replacing her provisionally by H.M.S. *Enterprise*. Small signal party from *Penzance* will, therefore, be re-embarked, and His Majesty's Government greatly hope that it may be unnecessary to land further parties from British ship. His Majesty's Government intend also to withdraw *Enterprise* at earliest opportunity.

In these circumstances, there would be every advantage in Italian landing parties also being re-embarked at earliest possible moment, but it appears from telegrams from *Penzance* that they are still awaiting orders authorising their re-embarkation. Continued presence of foreign armed forces in Hodeida, in spite of Saudi guarantees of protection, can only lead to friction and increase very danger which it is intended to avert.

Please, therefore, make every effort to induce Italian Government to issue necessary instructions without delay.

(Repeated to Jedda, No. 77; Aden, No. 49; India, No. 23; and naval authorities.)

[E 2940/79/25]

No. 63.

*Sir John Simon to Sir A. Ryan (Jedda).*

(No. 78.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

*Foreign Office, May 8, 1934.*

IN reply to question in House of Commons on the 7th May requesting information as to situation at Hodeida and in the Yemen, I made following statement:—

"On 1st May H.M.S. *Penzance* reported that the Yemeni civil and military authorities had withdrawn from Hodeida, and that the local tribesmen had looted the customs shed and arms depot belonging to the Yemeni Government. Private property was reported still intact. H.M.S. *Penzance* at once proceeded to Hodeida in order to safeguard the interests of the British community there, consisting mainly of some 300 British Indians. As a result of these precautions, no disturbances appear to have occurred in the town. On 5th May the Saudi forces entered Hodeida and assumed complete responsibility for the maintenance of order in the town and for the protection of foreign life and property. H.M.S. *Penzance* is still at Hodeida. Apart from the capture by Saudi forces of the Yemeni ports of Medi, Loheia and Hodeida, His Majesty's Government have no trustworthy

information regarding the position in the Yemen. I would add, as to the general position, that His Majesty's Government have observed an attitude of strict neutrality towards the conflict between Ibn Saud and the Imam, with both of whom His Majesty's Government are in friendly treaty relations, taking only such measures as have proved essential for the safeguarding of lives and property of British subjects and British-protected persons in the area affected by the hostilities."

[E 2756/79/25]

No. 64.

*Sir John Simon to Sir E. Drummond (Rome).*

(No. 147.)

(Telegraphic.)

*Foreign Office, May 8, 1934.*

YOUR despatch No. 371 of the 28th April: Saudi-Yemeni conflict.

Paragraph 2.—You may keep Italian Government informed of actual course of events as reported by His Majesty's Minister at Jedda, but you will, I know, be careful not to make any communications regarding Saudi Government's views or plans, which might be regarded by them as a breach of confidence. Similarly, you may make use of any clearly non-confidential information from Aden or naval authorities in Red Sea.

[E 2980/79/25]

No. 65.

*Sir E. Drummond to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 9.)*

(No. 130.)

(Telegraphic.)

*Rome, May 8, 1934.*

SIGNOR SUVICH told me that Imam had not appealed to Italian Government to land troops at Hodeida for protection of Europeans (see your telegram No. 130). Instructions given to Italian commander had been to look around on arrival and if he had found that we had landed men, to do the same. As we had disembarked some small parties, he had followed suit.

He thought, however, that if our men were re-embarking, there would be no difficulty as regards Italian re-embarkation, though he would not make a definite promise until he had consulted his experts. He said that it might, however, be necessary to leave two or three men ashore to keep in contact with Italians in the town and to report events. Though I deprecated this, it seems to me to be mainly question of local communications.

Signor Suvich implied that, as long as we kept the ship at Hodeida, Italian Government would do the same. Destroyer *Turbine* is being sent there. He asked that commanders of our respective vessels should keep in contact so that, if later further landings became necessary, reasons would be known to both. For instance, if Saudi troops attacked Italian, but not British, subjects, Italy would have to land men, but he cited this as an example and not as a probability. He had had somewhat disturbing news from Moka to the effect that there was concentration, not of Imam's forces, but of anti-Saudi tribes, in the neighbourhood, and that some Saudi forces on camels were advancing, so there might be a clash there. Commander of *Ostia* had, however, been instructed only to land troops in order to protect Italian life and property in case of necessity.

I feel fairly convinced that orders for re-embarkation will be given almost immediately and that desire and object of Italian Government is to do exactly what we do; neither more nor less.

Since drafting above, I have received from Italian Government written communication dated to-day urging once more, in view of present developments, desire of holding early conversations between the two Powers. Full text by post to-night.

(Repeated to Jedda.)



[E 2923/79/25]

No. 66.

*Sir John Simon to M. Grandi.*

Your Excellency,

*Foreign Office, May 9, 1934.*

ON the 7th May a member of your staff called at the Foreign Office and made a communication from the Italian Government regarding the conflict which has unfortunately broken out between King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia and the Imam Yahia of the Yemen. This communication began by stating that the Italian Government learnt that the Imam had invited the mediation of friendly States by a telegram dated the 2nd May, addressed to Rome, London, Moscow, Bagdad and The Hague. The Italian Government were anxious to know whether His Majesty's Government contemplated any approach to the two belligerents as a result of this telegram, and, if so, the Italian Government, fearing lest the situation should further deteriorate, wished to make it clear that they would be disposed to take similar action, with a view to furthering a peaceful settlement, in agreement with the British Government. In making this communication the Italian Government were inspired by the spirit of the conclusions of the Rome Conversations of 1927.

2. I now have the honour to inform your Excellency in reply to this communication that His Majesty's Government fully share the desire of the Italian Government to do all in their power to help bring about a peaceful settlement of the present dispute. They have, indeed, ever since the dispute first showed signs of becoming acute, lost no opportunity to urge counsels of moderation on King Ibn Saud, and they think that King Ibn Saud was influenced by this advice in making the repeated efforts which he undoubtedly did to reach a peaceful settlement with the Imam and in postponing an actual outbreak of hostilities for so long. As the Italian Government are aware, His Majesty's Government also took the opportunity of the recent visit to Sanaa by the Resident at Aden to urge similar counsels of moderation on the Imam.

3. Unfortunately, however, these counsels of moderation did not suffice to avert a rupture; and His Majesty's Government cannot but feel that, in view of this experience and of the present situation consequent upon the actual outbreak of hostilities, the conditions which might make any effort at mediation useful do not at present exist. In these circumstances, while they will continue to watch for any favourable opportunity to do whatever may lie in their power to further the cause of the re-establishment of peace, they feel that nothing would be gained by any attempt at mediation at the present stage.

I have, &amp;c.

JOHN SIMON.

[E 2988/79/25]

No. 67.

*Sir E. Drummond to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 10.)*

(No. 135.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

*Rome, May 9, 1934.*

MY telegrams Nos. 130 and 131.

Italian Government confirmed to-day in writing that they have decided to re-embark Italian contingents at present ashore, instructions to this end having already been sent to the local Italian naval commander to concert with his British colleague with a view to simultaneous withdrawal of British and Italian contingents. On completion of this withdrawal two Italian naval vessels will remain at Hodeida, but will be replaced by another ship, unless it seems desirable to withdraw all naval units from Hodeida.

Italian Government hope that no further disembarkation of Italian contingents will be necessary at Hodeida, but should necessity unhappily arise Italian naval commander has instructions to put himself in touch and act in concert with his British colleague. Italian Government trust that His Majesty's Government will send similar instructions to the British naval commanding officer for his guidance in such eventuality.

Full text by post to-night.

(Repeated to Jedda.)

[E 2996/79/25]

No. 68.

*H.M.S. Enterprise to Admiralty.**May 10, 1934.*

(Telegraphic.)

ITALIAN senior naval officer has just informed me that his armed parties are being re-embarked as soon as possible.

[E 2988/79/25]

No. 69.

*Sir John Simon to Sir E. Drummond (Rome).*

(No. 158.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

*Foreign Office, May 11, 1934.*

YOUR telegram No. 135 of the 9th May: Arabia.

I have learnt this decision of Italian Government with great satisfaction, and request that you will so inform Signor Suvich, adding an expression of my personal thanks.

For the moment H.M.S. *Enterprise* will remain at Hodeida, but His Majesty's Government hope, if situation continues satisfactory, to be able to withdraw her shortly. I am requesting Admiralty to instruct her captain to act in sense outlined in your paragraph 2.

(Repeated to Jedda, No. 86.)

[E 3093/79/25]

No. 70.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 14.)*

(No. 104.)

Sir,

*Jedda, April 13, 1934.*

SINCE writing my despatch No. 91 of the 4th April, I have sent you several telegrams on the Saudi-Yemen situation, ending with my telegram No. 60 of the 12th April, as well as the two communiqués enclosed in my printed despatches No. 101 of the 9th April and No. 102 of the 11th April. There is little of real importance to add to these reports, as regards the main course of events, but, as the King has been in Jedda and is leaving to-day, I find this a convenient moment to record a few matters of subsidiary interest.

2. The King arrived in Jedda early on the 11th April, in accordance with his usual practice of visiting this town soon after the pilgrimage. I was received in formal audience that morning, accompanied by Mr. Furlonge, and again this morning, when I presented the Commissioner of Port Sudan, now here on a visit. We all gained the impression that His Majesty was in good form. He seemed somewhat tired and worn, but exhibited no signs of nervousness or discomposure. We discussed general subjects only, as etiquette requires. For all His Majesty showed, there might have been no war on nearer than Paraguay. He has left all business to Sheikh Yussuf Yasin during this stay and I need not record his visit to Jedda otherwise, except in the Jedda report.

3. The statement in the last paragraph of my telegram No. 52 of the 6th April that the Amirs Feisal and Muhammad had started for the front was based on the communiqué issued that day, but was erroneous as regards the Amir Feisal. I learnt afterwards that, as his troops were mounted on camels, he preferred to delay his own departure and catch them up later. So far as I know, he had not set forth up to yesterday.

4. Sheikh Yussuf Yasin, whom I have seen daily since the 10th April, discussed the situation with me that evening and again on the 12th April. He added little, as regards the actual operations in the south, to the communiqués, except that he spoke of a movement of submission to the Ibn Saud among the tribes along the littoral. I think that he was referring to tribes on both sides of the *de facto* frontier, and at one moment spoke of the tribes as far as Luhayya having submitted, or being ready to submit, but he was rather muddled when I reverted to the subject on the 12th April.



5. You will have heard of the abundant talk of mediation in Egypt and elsewhere. The most important move in this direction so far seems to be that of a group including Haj Amin Hussein of Jerusalem, Abdul Hamid Bey Said, the Egyptian politician, Hashim Bey Attas of Syria and, it would appear from General Wanchope's telegram No. 60 to me (repeated to the Colonial Office), an Iraqi element of which I have not heard otherwise. I am not clear as to how far Prince Omar Toussoun is connected with this group, or as to the attitude of the King of Iraq. I gather that the plan is to send a mission to visit both Ibn Saud and the Imam in the hope of composing their differences.

6. Judging by the language of Sheikh Yussuf Yasin and other indications, I think that Ibn Saud's present attitude towards all outside peace movers is one of polite aloofness. If a mixed Arab mission should visit him and he has not sustained any serious reverse in the interval, I anticipate that his reply will be such as may be summed up in the words: "That wicked man has forced me across the Rubicon. I have told him my present terms. And there is no might or power but in God."

7. The public of Jedda show very little interest in the war, so far as I can ascertain. I hear of no important repercussions in Mecca. Any loyalty that may be felt towards Ibn Saud in these towns is well contained. Rumour is readier to locate the Imam's forces a few hours' march from Riyadh or at Jizan than to echo the official news of victories over the border.

8. There is, of course, a great deal in the two local papers. Most of it, apart from communiqués, is not worth recording, but one passage in the *Umm-al-Qura* of the 6th April is at least faintly amusing. An article headed "Poor News" refers first to the *Times* leader of the 24th March. It is not, however, directed, as might appear at first sight, against that sympathetic journal, but against commentators who have tried to make out that the 4,000 hostages mentioned by the *Times* are at Riyadh, not at Sana. The *Umm-al-Qura* assures its readers that the number of hostages sent to Sana is not less than 30,000, not merely 4,000, as stated in the *Times*; and adds that there is nothing of the kind at Riyadh.

9. The press also announces the formation of a First-Aid Association for the benefit of the fighting forces, under the presidency of Muhammad-ash-Shaibi, the Keeper of the Key of the Kaaba. The objects of the association are apparently to collect funds from the people to supply first-aid requirements, which have not hitherto been considered necessary adjuncts to warfare in this country. Its subscription list has been opened by the head of the long-established merchant family of Keynal and that of the Al Fadhi family, who put down £200 and £100 gold respectively. Nothing has yet been said as to how the monies collected will be spent.

10. I am sending copies of this despatch to Rome and Aden.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

[E 3101/79/25]

No. 71.

Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 14.)

(No. 115.)

Sir,

Jedda, April 19, 1934.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 104 of the 13th April, I have the honour to submit a further report on the Saudi-Yemen situation. It must be even more meagre than usual, as I have had no personal contact with the Saudi Government since that date. They may be too busy; they may have too little to tell to make it worth telling; or they may be holding off me owing to the imbroglio over the Royal slave, who took refuge in the Legation on the 11th April and who is still undisposed of.

2. I enclose a translation of a communiqué issued in the *Umm-al-Qura* of the 13th April. It merely confirmed what Sheikh Yussuf Yasin had told me the previous day, as recorded in my telegram No. 60 of the 12th April. You will observe that the Saudi Government give in their communiqué the text of the Imam's telegram to the King, one phrase in which is completely obscure (that

relating to the Yam territory); but give an account only of the King's reply. Sheikh Yussuf Yasin had followed the same procedure in his conversation with me. The account he gave me of the King's telegram was similar to that in the communiqué, except in one particular, which I have not thought it worth while to telegraph. The sheikh mentioned the "release of hostages" as one of the King's conditions. The communiqué refers more explicitly to hostages taken in the mountains, i.e., the Faifa-Beni Malik area, and adds that the King demanded that the Imam should cease to concern himself with the people in that area.

3. No further war news has appeared in the press, except a short announcement in the *Saut-ul-Hijaz* of the 16th April, a translation of which I also enclose.<sup>(1)</sup> The most definite statement in it is that the last of the forts at Haradh has fallen. Mr. Philby, who gave me the same news said that the Yemeni officer commanding had escaped. He stated that the position at Baqim was unchanged, but that the Saudis attached importance to the occupation of Bab-al-Hadid (see the enclosure in my printed despatch No. 102 of the 11th April), as it commanded the approach to the disputed mountain area.

4. I still have no confirmation of Mr. Philby's further statement (see my telegram No. 62 of the 16th April) that the King received on the 14th April a telegram from the Imam agreeing to all his demands. My general impression is that Ibn Saud, having embarked on the war, is not very eager to call it off. If he finds himself in a strong position, he may even have some idea of asking for an indemnity, a possibility foreshadowed in a report from Koweit, dated the 1st March, a copy of which was forwarded by the Political Resident to the India Office on the 7th March. I have heard no reference to this here during the recent phase, but the general tone of the inspired press has been determined. Thus, on the 13th April, the *Umm-al-Qura* had an article referring to foreign reports of the Imam's strength. According to these reports, said the writer, he could mobilise from 50,000 to 100,000 fighting men. The Saudis knew that he could in fact muster twice that number; that he had arms left behind by the Turks and collected from other sources; and that he had gold and silver galore. Yet they must defend their frontiers and believed that God would give them the victory, because they were neither unjust nor aggressors.

5. I am awaiting to-morrow's *Umm-al-Qura* before telegraphing further, on the chance of its containing something more than the single definite fact recorded in paragraph 3 above. In the meantime, I turn again to subsidiary matters.

6. The Amir Feisal left Jedda for the south in the small hours of the morning on the 15th April. His passage through this town was exceedingly unostentatious. Before he left, it was announced that his brother Khalid, a mere lad, was to act as President of the Council and Minister of the Interior. No announcement has been published regarding the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. As I write I learn that Fuad Bey Hamza has returned, and that he resumed his duties as Deputy Minister yesterday. As, however, the Amir Feisal is still in the country, it must be assumed that he is still technically at the head of the Ministry.

7. I reported in my telegram No. 62 of the 16th April the arrival here on that day of the self-constituted mission of Arab mediators. I believe the list I gave was correct, but as the *Saut-ul-Hijaz* of that morning gave a slightly different list of those expected, I cannot be absolutely certain of my own. The party, who landed in pilgrim garb, were met on board by Sheikh Yussuf Yasin and others. They were met at the quay by the Governor of Jedda and a guard of honour. This constitutes a first-class official reception, but I accept none the less readily Mr. Philby's view that the King holds the mission of little account and regards them as a nuisance to be suffered with a show of gladness. Mr. Philby quotes a recent utterance of the King to the effect that only the Iraqis are worth anything and that the others just say "Ouah! Ouah!" Nevertheless, I should dearly like to hear the King in converse with leaders of Moslem thought like Haj Amin Huseyni and the Amir Shakib Arslan.

8. The same *Saut-ul-Hijaz* of the 16th April contains a long article partly or wholly reproduced from the *Al Fath* newspaper of Cairo in its issue of the 29th March. It purports to give the text of telegrams exchanged between Fuad Bey Hamza and the King and Abdullah-al-Wazir and the Imam, when the Abha Conference had broken down. They are of little present interest, especially as

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.



the dates are not given, but the telegram ascribed to Fuad Bey contains one interesting observation, viz.: "After the conclusion of the Anglo-Yemen Treaty," he says, "Abdullah-al-Wazir and his colleagues began to show obstinacy and fraudulence."

9. I am sending copies of this despatch and enclosures to Rome and Aden.  
I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

Enclosure in No. 71.

*Extract from the Umm-al-Qura, April 13, 1934.*

OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUÉ No 3.

HIS Majesty the King has received a telegram from the Imam Yahya, reading as follows:—

"What has taken place is enough. We ask protection of God from the evil action of those who are lying in wait for chances to realise their ambitions against Islam. The Yam territory is under your rule (or: is left for your decision). We have ordered our troops to retire from the Najran area; please request Seyyid Abdullah-al-Wazir to come to you to conclude the Treaty of Brotherhood; may God protect you. This has been sent to you via Asmara, because our wireless is out of order and is at present under repair; please sent your reply via Asmara. Compliments."

His Majesty the King has replied that he is prepared to reopen discussion with the (Imam's) representative, Ibn-al-Wazir, and to make peace, if the retirement of the Imam's troops from Najran is proved; the hostages taken from our mountain people are returned and the Imam's relations with them discontinued; and the Idrisis are returned to him in pursuance of the Arwa Agreement made between him and the Imam, for it has been proved that the object of keeping them there was merely to use them as instruments for stirring up insurrection in Tihamat Asir. If these demands are complied with, the Government hope that the calamity of war will be averted and replaced by peace and concord, which we long for from the bottom of our hearts.

[E 3083/79/25]

No. 72.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 14.)*

(No. 112.)  
(Telegraphic.)

*Jedda, May 13, 1934.*

FUAD returned yesterday for one night only. His principal object was to receive communication which Italian representative had been instructed to make.

Italian Government explained amicably their recent proceedings at Hodeida. They assured Saudi Government that their policy was one of strict neutrality and that they had no intention of intervening in present conflict. They had made a similar communication to the Imam.

2. Following are main points in information given to me by Fuad this morning:—

(a) The heir apparent's primary object ten days ago was to guard against danger of Yemeni descent on littoral from the mountains.

It was thought that this might best be achieved by securing Saada, but the King had later countermanded this in order not to create a situation from which it might be difficult to recede. Advance was therefore suspended, and present position was one of an effective though not an agreed truce.

(b) Telegram from the Imam, dated 11th May, promised the surrender of Idrisis within three days and evacuation of Beni Malik, &c., within five.

(c) Italian Chargé d'Affaires had made communication as above. He had broached the question of appointment of an Italian agent at Hodeida. Saudi Government were replying that they could not compromise any pre-existing situation by recognising such an agent, but would not object to presence in an unofficial capacity of any person whom Italians had in view.

3. Fuad seemed to think developments at (b) offer definite prospect of early peace. On my referring to what he had said about "guarantee," he intimated that the King would not be over-exacting, and desired only basis for future harmonious relations with Imam. I welcomed this statement, and said that I hoped settlement would be unequivocal, unlike the past arrangement, lack of precision of which had caused so much subsequent trouble.

4. I expressed view that Italian communication was of great importance and value. I refrained from comment on proposed agent beyond observing that we had some one at Hodeida who was connected with Residency at Aden, but had not, I thought, any official standing in Hodeida.

(Repeated to H.M.S. *Enterprise*, No. 17.)

[E 3085/79/25]

No. 73.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 14.)*

(No. 114.)  
(Telegraphic.)

*Jedda, May 14, 1934.*

OFFICIAL communiqué published yesterday afternoon announces that following on Imam's undertaking to surrender Idrisis, evacuate mountains and release hostages, the King has ordered suspension of hostilities on all fronts with a view to resumption of peace negotiations.

(Repeated to H.M.S. *Enterprise*, No. 18.)

[E 3077/79/25]

No. 74.

*Sir John Simon to Sir E. Drummond (Rome).*

(No. 165.)  
(Telegraphic.)

*Foreign Office, May 14, 1934.*

MY telegram No. 158 of 11th May: Arabia.

In view of suspension of hostilities and impending armistice (see Sir A. Ryan's telegram No. 114 of 14th May), it appears unnecessary to retain warships off Hodeida. If Italian Government concur in this view, I hope they will agree to withdraw their naval units from the Yemeni coast without replacing them. In that event, His Majesty's Government will act similarly.

(Confidential.)

Admiralty desire to allow *Enterprise* to return home to pay off, but are aware of recent despatch of at least three Italian destroyers from Mediterranean southwards. It would be unfortunate were they to arrive and entail retention of *Enterprise*. You should therefore press Italian Government as strongly as possible in sense of first paragraph.

[E 3121/1251/91]

No. 75.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 15.)*

(No. 123.)  
Sir,

*Jedda, April 23, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No. 115 of the 21st March relative to the discussion between Mr. Rendel and Sir George Maxwell on the 8th March of the contents of Sir George Maxwell's memorandum

[10923]

1 2



of the 22nd February on slavery in Arabia. I submit the following observations:—

2. A member of my staff, Mr. Furlonge, has been engaged for many months on a study of the slavery question, and is now on the point of completing a valuable memorandum on the subject. You may prefer to await this paper before pursuing the questions raised in the present correspondence, but, as the memorandum will take some time to type, I prefer to deal at once with the most specific questions arising out of Sir George Maxwell's memorandum, as regards Saudi Arabia.

3. Without anticipating Mr. Furlonge's very comprehensive review, I may sum up the more relevant results of his careful and dispassionate analysis of a great mass of evidence. He estimates the total number of domestic slaves in this country at a figure not exceeding 40,000. This slave population is liable to a good deal of depletion owing to slaves dying or being freed by their masters. This depletion is compensated partly by the birth of slave children and partly by importation, but the main source of fresh supplies of imported slaves would appear to be the Yemen and they seem to consist largely of persons, whether of local or ultimate African origin, born in that country and exported overland to Saudi Arabia. Mr. Furlonge considers that the trade across the Red Sea is at present almost dead and doubts whether more than a few slaves have been brought across annually during the last two or three years. It is difficult to form an opinion as to the disposal of these few. Some may be absorbed by the Yemen. If any come to Saudi Arabia they probably do not come overland but are landed from dhows, which may have crawled up the coast, on to the Asir littoral. Such landing need not necessarily take place with the connivance of the Saudi authorities in ports. Small parties might easily be landed by smugglers at other quiet spots.

4. If these conclusions are correct, they are reassuring, but Mr. Furlonge stresses the fact that the present position is due largely and perhaps almost entirely to economic depression. This depression operates in various ways. If Saudi Arabia and Yemen be taken together as a consuming unit, it diminishes the demand for fresh supplies from across the Red Sea. It reduces the total requirements of Saudi Arabia, considered separately, but depression in the Yemen may tend, nevertheless, to stimulate the exportation of Yemen-bred slaves from the Yemen.

5. While economic depression is the dominant factor at present, it cannot be assumed that the action of the Saudi Government is not a contributory factor in preventing abuse. I was formerly very sceptical about this, but I am now inclined to think that Ibn Saud, while unable and probably unwilling to destroy the institution of slavery, realises that the traffic in newly-captured slaves is undesirable and means his restrictions to be enforced, even though they may be defeated by remote local officials or more probably by smugglers.

6. The most precise account of the Saudi restrictions is that given me by Fuad Bey Hamza in the conversation reported in paragraphs 2 and 3 of my despatch No. 187 of the 23rd July, 1930. In a later conversation reported in paragraph 3 of my despatch No. 123 of the 2nd April, 1931, Sheikh Yussuf Yasin again assured me, though in more general terms, that effective restrictions were in force. In the Saudi note attached to the Saudi-Italian Treaty of the 10th February, 1932, the Saudi Government again referred to them and went so far as to state, doubtless with exaggeration, that the measures taken had been so effective that for several years no person had been able to import slaves into the country. Finally, Sheikh Yussuf Yasin renewed in conversation with me only some ten days ago his previous general assurance. He added that he thought something had been published some years ago, but this, I think, was clearly a mistake.

7. The Legation has had two sidelights on this matter. It is recorded that in the course of the investigation by the local authorities of a case in which we were interested, the following question was put to the person implicated: "Did you not know that the sale of slaves from abroad is forbidden, except with a permit from the Government?" A case has also come to our notice recently, in which the Qadhi of Mecca refused to entertain an application by an ostensible slave for recognition of his free status on the ground that the regulations precluded any such application by a person enslaved more than twenty years earlier. Another account of this is that applications by persons enslaved before the inauguration of the Saudi régime in the Hejaz are barred. In either case, there is an implied recognition of the principle that persons recently enslaved are not lawfully held in slavery, and however theoretical the legal redress may be in other cases, it is a

fact that in the particular case of the enslavement of pilgrims the Saudi Government are nowadays ready to treat it as illegal.

8. A third sidelight is afforded by an analysis made by Mr. Furlonge of the stories related by slaves manumitted by this Legation since 1926. In all but fifteen of these 209 cases, which must be regarded as typical, the slaves had either been born in slavery or enslaved as young children not less than ten years ago.

9. All this brings me to Sir George Maxwell's proposed distinction between the born slave and the captive slave. It will be seen that Ibn Saud in principle already makes a not dissimilar distinction between persons who have been born in or who have grown up in slavery and others. It is true that he has not affirmed the distinction by any public act nor has he taken any general measures to ensure the liberation of all recently captured slaves in his territory. On the other hand, the evidence tends to show that at present the vast majority of slaves in Saudi Arabia are persons born in slavery or enslaved in early childhood a good many years ago.

10. I do not consider that the time is ripe for any spontaneous approach to Ibn Saud on the basis suggested by Sir George Maxwell. It must always be remembered that the King, encouraged by his advisers, looks at the slavery question when it is raised by foreign Powers, not from the point of view of morality or internal policy but from that of his desire to safeguard his independence. His feeling that European Powers may want to impair this is morbid, when it is a question of consenting to treaty articles like article 7 of the Treaty of Jedda; but there is no doubt that the retention by His Majesty's Government alone of the right to manumit slaves in his territory is in fact a breach in Ibn Saud's position as an independent sovereign. It is too often forgotten that the maintenance of the system by the letters attached to the Treaty of Jedda was provisional and that His Majesty's Government gave an undertaking to consider its abolition as soon as the co-operation provided for in the treaty should have made the exercise of the right no longer necessary. The Saudi Government might now argue with some plausibility that they had eliminated the recently-captured slave, and were entitled to ask for the fulfilment of that pledge, which can hardly be taken to mean that the right of manumission should be preserved until there were no more slaves in the country.

11. In any case I have every reason to believe that the Saudi Government will take up the question when any favourable opportunity offers, now that the Treaty of Jedda has become denunciable. Then, in my opinion, will be the time to consider the possibility of inducing Ibn Saud to define his attitude by a public act. It is for consideration whether, if he did so and the act provided adequate safeguards against a revival of the traffic in newly-captured slaves, it might not be legitimate to abandon the right of manumission subject to (a) the preservation of article 7 of the Treaty of Jedda, and (b) an understanding that this Legation would be free to bring to the notice of the Saudi Government cases in which the regulations seemed to have been violated and to be informed of the result of the investigations. Such an understanding would have very little value, but, in my opinion, the value of the manumission system is easy to exaggerate. We cannot honourably abandon it without obtaining some compensatory advantage in connexion with slavery, but it affects a very small number of slaves; the ultimate good it does them is open to doubt in many cases; it creates from time to time difficult problems; and the Saudi Government could make it ineffective at any time by refusing to tolerate the repatriation of the freed slaves.

12. In the last paragraph of his paper, Sir George Maxwell speaks of the possibility of awakening some public opinion in favour of the gradual suppression of the born-slave system. If public opinion, in a European sense, can be said to exist in this country at all, it is likely to be long refractory to modern ideas on the subject of slavery. There is some hope that Ibn Saud himself, if he lives and remains great, may find it politic to do more than he has hitherto done, but the best hope is, I think, that there are among his advisers some who would like to see an obstacle removed from the path of Saudi Arabia's progress. A man like Fuad Bey Hamza, for instance, is all for independence and would like to see all Arabia united under Ibn Saud, but his personal sentiments are probably mildly opposed to slavery and he certainly regards it as *vieux jeu*. In a very personal conversation, which I had with him on the 22nd April, and which arose out of the case of the Royal slave now in the Legation, he showed distinct readiness to look at the general problem as one of social and political importance. He has the



advantage, for this purpose, of having one of the religious prepossessions which make some Moslems think that what the Prophet tolerated he approved, and some perhaps to endorse the theory which Mr. Consul Zohrab declared to be prevalent in 1879, that there must be slaves, if a man is to acquire merit by setting them free. I told Fuad Bey that, while I personally should be glad to see the position as regards Royal slaves cleared up, I should prefer any more general discussion postponed. I hinted that there was room for a further evolution, in which men like himself and the Amir Feisal, the most enlightened member of the Royal family, might play a useful part. I gathered, however, that the Saudi Government might force the pace not by denouncing the Treaty of Jedda, but by asking His Majesty's Government to review certain questions incidental to it, of which slavery would be one. As this conversation was of a private nature, I would ask that it should not be referred to in any exchange of views with Sir George Maxwell or with the Saudi Minister in London.

I have, &c.  
ANDREW RYAN.

[E 3167/279/91]

No. 76.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 16.)*

(No. 130.)

HIS Majesty's Minister at Jedda presents his compliments to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit to him copy of his note to the Acting Saudi Minister for Foreign Affairs, dated the 28th April, respecting the Qatar boundaries and the Anglo-Turkish conventions of 1913 and 1914.

*Jedda, April 28, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 76.

*Sir A. Ryan to Acting Saudi Minister for Foreign Affairs.*

(After Compliments.)

Your Excellency,

*Jedda, April 28, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to state that I have received instructions from His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to inform the Government of His Majesty King Abdul Aziz, as a matter of courtesy, that the Government of the United States of America have recently asked them for information regarding the treaty basis of the territorial status and boundaries of certain territories and spheres of influence in Eastern Arabia, and have been furnished in reply with copies of the Anglo-Turkish conventions of the 29th July, 1913, and of the 9th March, 1914. I enclose, for convenience of reference, copies of these conventions, the second of which was ratified and published.

It has been pointed out to the United States Government that, while the Anglo-Turkish convention of 1913 was not ratified, the boundary laid down in article 11 of that convention is mentioned, adequately defined and definitely adopted in article 3 of the ratified convention of 1914, which in the view of His Majesty's Government remains operative. Since article 7 of the convention of 1913 contains provisions regarding the frontier of Koweit, the attention of the United States Government has also been drawn to the subsequent Koweit-Nejd Boundary Convention of the 2nd December, 1922.

With highest respects,

ANDREW RYAN.

[E 3311/79/25]

No. 77.

*Sir E. Drummond to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 23.)*

(No. 149.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

*Rome, May 22, 1934.*

MY telegram No. 143.

Signor Savich told me that I should shortly receive note informing me that Italian Government agreed in principle to proposal for complete withdrawal of ships.

They thought, however, that before withdrawal actually took place commanders of ships should be consulted as to whether local situation really permitted such a withdrawal without danger.

Italian Government had enquired in this sense of their commander, and they hoped that we would do the same.

If replies were satisfactory, he trusted that the two commanders would arrange simultaneous withdrawal in mutual consultation.

(Repeated to Jedda.)

[E 3348/79/25]

No. 78.

*Sir John Simon to Sir G. Clerk (Paris).*

[By Bag.]

(No. 46. Saving.)

(Telegraphic.)

*Foreign Office, May 24, 1934.*

FRENCH despatch vessel *Ypres*, sent to Hodeida on its capture by Saudi forces, is apparently still there, as are also two Italian warships. Our reports indicate that Saudi Administration is firmly established, and Saudi Government have given satisfactory assurances as regards safeguarding of foreign lives and interests. Saudi Government appear to resent continued presence of foreign warships. (For your confidential information, this appears to be directed especially against Italians, of whose intentions Saudi Government are suspicious.) Last British warship was withdrawn from Hodeida on 19th May, and, as at present advised, I consider continuous presence of foreign warships only likely to lead to friction, and therefore to increase danger which it is intended to avert.

H.M.S. *Penzance* is about to pay a further visit to Hodeida to report on situation. His Majesty's Government are, however, still anxious that all foreign warships should be withdrawn as soon as practicable, and I am instructing His Majesty's Ambassador in Rome to approach Italian Government accordingly. Please urge French Government to instruct local naval commander to concert with his British and Italian colleagues with a view to simultaneous withdrawal as soon as possible.

[E 3348/79/25]

No. 79.

*Sir John Simon to Sir E. Drummond (Rome).*

(No. 178.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

*Foreign Office, May 24, 1934.*

YOUR telegram No. 149 of 22nd May, and Jedda telegram No. 121 of 23rd May: Warships at Hodeida.

On departure of H.M.S. *Enterprise* from Hodeida on 19th May, she was not replaced in hope that Italian Government would follow suit. Italian warships and French despatch vessel are, however, apparently still there.

H.M.S. *Penzance* is now about to revisit Hodeida to report on situation. His Majesty's Government are, however, still eager, that all foreign warships should be withdrawn as soon as practicable. Please, therefore, again urge this view on Italian Government, and ask them to instruct local naval commander to concert with his British and French colleagues for simultaneous withdrawal.

I am instructing His Majesty's Ambassador to approach French Government in similar sense.



[E 3435/79/25]

No. 80.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 25.)*

(No. 124.)

(Telegraphic.)

*Jedda, May 25, 1934.*

MY telegram No. 118.

Morning paper announces conclusion, or impending conclusion, of treaty, but adds it is not expected to take effect until the King's three conditions have been complied with. It adds that there has been no change in military situation, except that preparations have been made for all contingencies. It describes separately an impressive review of troops at Taif on 23rd May.

Fuad being ill, Yusuf Yasin saw me this morning under the King's instructions. He said the treaty had actually been signed.

Parts of it would be kept secret for the present, but he gave me a general outline of its provisions. These include recognition of Saudi sovereignty over Najran and confirmation otherwise of existing frontiers.

Yusuf Yasin went on to say, however, that Imam had not yet fulfilled conditions regarding surrender of Idrisis, release of hostages and evacuation of mountain area. The King had become increasingly suspicious of his intentions and had informed his sons that if conditions were not complied with by yesterday there could be no peace. At the instance of mission of Arab mediators, he had prolonged the time until 29th May. Yusuf Yasin also referred to review at Taif one object of which seems to have been to impress Abdullah-al-Wazir. He admitted meaning that his communication to be that unless the King's conditions were complied with by 29th May hostilities would recommence. He assured me that there were no other conditions, as the King had overruled the suggestion that he should claim indemnity or hold on to Yemeni territory for a time (see *Observer* of 6th May).

Saudi Government seems to be impressed by reports that even if Imam desires peace his oldest son is bent on war.

(Repeated to Aden, No. 102, for self and navy.)

[E 3436/79/25]

No. 81.

*Sir E. Drummond to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 26.)*

(No. 154.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

*Rome, May 25, 1934.*

MY telegram No. 149 and your telegram No. 178.

Although dated 23rd May, it was only this morning that I received communication from Italian Government foreshadowed in my above-mentioned telegram. This communication states that local conditions, particularly possible misunderstanding of bases of peace negotiations, especially in regard to evacuation of lower coastal area of Yemen by Saudi troops, and military movements by both parties in Hodeida area, make it doubtful whether it would be convenient to proceed to withdraw men-of-war at present in that port, although Italian Government desire to carry out this withdrawal as soon as lives and interests of European subjects are secure. Italian Government have consequently requested further report from Italian naval commander; they are, however, ready to give instructions to him to co-operate with his British colleague in order to examine local situation and arrive at a common agreement regarding withdrawal and make proposals to their respective Governments. It is added that "this proposal has regard also to recent arrival of other men-of-war of third States at Hodeida."

Copy by post to-night.

I carried out this evening instructions contained in your telegram No. 178. Signor Savich expressed agreement with the course proposed.

(Repeated to Jedda.)

[E 3437/79/25]

No. 82.

*Sir G. Clerk to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 26.)*

(No. 80.)

(Telegraphic.) *En clair.*

[By Telephone.]

*Paris, May 26, 1934.*

YOUR telegram No. 46, Saving.

French Government are prepared to issue necessary instructions to their local naval commander, but emphasise that the withdrawal must be simultaneous on the part of all three Powers.

[E 3550/715/25]

No. 83.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 30.)*

(No. 134. Confidential.)

Sir,

*Jedda, May 4, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith the Jedda report for April 1934.

2. Copies have been distributed as in the list appended to the report for January.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

Enclosure in No. 83.

JEDDA REPORT FOR APRIL 1934.

I.—Internal Affairs.

67. Ibn Saud remained in Mecca throughout the month except for a visit to Jedda from the 11th to the 13th April, in the course of which he twice received His Majesty's Minister in formal audience. He appeared to be completely composed in spite of his preoccupations in the south. He opened a new session of the Legislative Council, a body of which very little had been heard for some time, on the 21st April.

68. The heir apparent remained in supreme command in the inland portion of the southern front. The Amir Feisal left early on the 15th April to assume the command in the littoral. Their younger brother, Muhammad, had already left for Riyadh to lead further troops from Nejd. A still younger brother, Khalid, was appointed Acting President of the Council and Acting Minister of the Interior in place of Feisal.

69. A story of Ibn Saud in merry monarch mood is worth recording. It is vouched for by Mr. Philby, who was present. While in Jedda the King was dining with his courtiers. The company included Ahmed Banaja, a notable of Jedda, who was Minister of Finance under the Hashimite régime, and Sheikh Ali Taha, that pale shadow who combines the functions of Assistant Governor with those of Assistant Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs. Banaja is a man so noted for his pusillanimity that it is a subject of chaff. The King asked him whether there was anyone present whom he could face up to. Banaja, after some hesitation, said he thought he could take on Ali Taha. The company thought he had chosen well, when the King ordered pistols for two and bade the couple to set to with them. But, to the surprise of all, it was Ali Taha who advanced boldly, while Banaja took cover behind the King's chair, until His Majesty called the duel off.

70. The effective direction of foreign affairs was in the hands of the King's political secretary, Sheikh Yusuf Yasin, during the first half of the month. His



official appointment as Acting Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs was notified to the foreign missions on the 31st March, but on the 16th April Fuad Bey Hamza returned from Abha and on the 18th April he resumed his duties at Mecca, apparently as Acting Minister.

71. The war with the Yemen overshadowed every other interest during the whole of April. No internal events of any consequence came to the notice of the Legation, nor were there any striking developments in the financial and economic domains. The following items may be noted:—

- (a) The position in regard to the proposed oil concession for the Koweit neutral zone remained indeterminate throughout the month. It should have been made clearer in paragraph 48 (a) of the last report that, although M. Ydlibi delayed somewhat his departure from Jedda, he left without having made definite arrangements in connexion with that or his other schemes. He had got to the length of proposing definite financial terms for the prospective neutral zone concession, but the Government have been tied up in knots over the position as regards the Sheikh of Koweit's joint interest and apparently over their own position in regard to the preferential right they gave last year to the Standard Oil Company of California.
- (b) The only known development in connexion with the possible exploitation in oil in the Northern Hejaz, in which M. Ydlibi and his friends are also interested, is that Dr. Nomland, the geologist of the Standard Oil Company of California, completed his inspection of the area (see paragraph 48 (c) of the last report), and returned to Jedda about the 13th April. He is thought not to have been greatly impressed. He left for Port Sudan *en route* for Eastern Arabia on the 16th April.
- (c) The Minister of Finance wrote to M. Ydlibi on the 26th April authorising him to form a syndicate in connexion with his bank scheme (see paragraph 48 (a) of the last report), and promising to consider any proposals that might be put forward. The letter was quite non-committal.
- (d) Messrs. Gellatly, Hankey and Co. are in treaty with the Government for a new contract to supply benzine. There has been talk for some time of Mr. Philby getting a monopoly of import for Sharqieh (Limited), but the fate up to date of his monopoly for cars of last year is hardly likely to encourage the Government to entertain his proposals.
- (e) The Banque Misr (paragraph 48 (c) of last report) is understood to be pursuing its projects, but the only outward manifestation has been the continued employment of the steamship *Zem Zem* in the pilgrimage trade. A reception was held on board on the 22nd April, under the joint auspices of the agents and the Egyptian consul. The Governor of Jedda was the guest of honour and the crowd was enormous, though other shipping agents were conspicuous by their absence, and the British and Italian were the only foreign representatives to attend.

## II.—Frontier Questions and Foreign Relations in Arabia.

72. Ibn Saud has won hands down in the first round of his war with the Imam Yahya. There are two main armies, inland and in the littoral region. The western forces took first Haradh, where the last fort fell about the 15th April; then Medi, the defence of which was abandoned on the 25th April, and which the Saudis occupied next day. Various fighting is reported from this area. The Saudis claim uninterrupted success in this, and appear to have enlisted the support of the tribes along the Yemen coast. When H.M.S. *Penzance* visited Medi on the 27th–28th April (see below) it was thought unlikely that Luhayya would be defended. The Amir Feisal was said to have 15,000 men under his command and to be expecting 10,000 more from Jizan. The accounts of operations inland are difficult to follow owing to the uncertainty of the situation of the places named. It appears, however, from the communiqués that

the eastern army had, by mid-April, occupied important positions, was operating in the country north-west and north-east of Saada, and had cut off Najran except on the south. There has been no further news from the country close to Saada, but it is claimed that the Yemenis were driven out of Najran on the 21st April and had been pursued to the only open pass leading to Wayla. Little has been published regarding the mountain area of the Beni Malik, &c. It was stated, however, on the 20th April that loyal tribes had got the upper hand in the area which the Yemenis had occupied, and that Abdul Wahhab-al-Idrisi's forces had been severely defeated inland from Abu Arish.

73. The two rulers have continued to send each other long telegrams. Ibn Saud keeps on insisting that he cannot stay his hand until the Imam has effectively complied with three demands now crystallised as follows: Evacuation of Najran; withdrawal from the mountain area, release of all hostages taken there and cessation of interference therein; surrender of the Idrisis. The Imam has gone on expressing complete readiness to comply, asking that hostilities should be suspended, and pressing Ibn Saud to receive at Mecca the head of the late Yemeni delegation at Abha, with a view to further treaty negotiations. The King has consented to receive this gentleman, Abdullah-al-Wazir, subject to a warning that his visit can make no difference until the demands are complied with. It is understood that in a telegram of the 29th April, not yet published, the Imam claimed to have fulfilled the condition in regard to Najran, which he has certainly evacuated under pressure, and asked for ten days in which to fulfil the other two. On the 30th April Abdullah-al-Wazir arrived in Mecca.

74. The war has caused much scandal among outside Moslems and Arabs. Various groups and individuals in Egypt and elsewhere have made belated efforts at mediation. The most active step in this direction has been the formation of a delegation consisting of Haj Amin Husayni, president of the Supreme Moslem Council in Palestine; the well-known Arab leader of Druse origin, the Amir Shakib Arslan; Hashim Bey-al-Atasi, a well-known Syrian politician; and Muhammad Ali Pasha Allouba, an Egyptian ex-Minister and lawyer. These gentlemen arrived in Jedda on the 16th April. They were given an official reception, and have been greatly feted in Mecca, but they make no difference. They do not seem to have any intention of going on to Sana.

75. It was reported on the 27th April that there were some thirty-six British families at Medi, where the situation still appeared to outside observers to be obscure. Arrangements were made for H.M.S. *Penzance* to visit the place with the sole object of reassuring and, if necessary, assisting British subjects. It was impossible to warn the Saudi Government before her arrival on the evening of the 28th April, and the Amir Feisal, who had in fact taken possession of Medi two days earlier, protested. Ibn Saud felt injured by this visit, all the more so as he had promised that British persons and interests would be fully safeguarded in any place his forces might occupy. On the 30th April Sir Andrew Ryan expressed surprise at the attitude which the Amir Feisal had taken up, and there ensued a friendly exchange of views and explanations between him and Fuad Bey Hamza. It is hoped that this will have cleared the air.

76. A portion of the long announced Saudi Green Book on the Saudi-Yemen dispute was published in the Mecca *Umm-al-Qura* on the 27th April, and the whole book appeared on the 29th.

77. For some time past His Majesty's Government have been considering the question of boundaries in the east of Ibn Saud's dominions, with special reference to the position in regard to Qatar. Among the reasons which have invested this question with new importance are the grant of the Hasa oil concession to the Standard Oil Company of California last year, uncertainty as to the territorial extension given to it by the Saudi Government, the danger of the American interests finding means to establish themselves in Qatar, and the dubious attitude of the Sheikh of Qatar, who appears, despite his treaty with His Majesty's Government, to have come to some sort of terms with Ibn Saud. His Majesty's Government have decided to take their stand on treaty arrangements made between them and the Turkish Government in 1913 and 1914. The effect of these was to determine the limits of Turkish sovereignty by a "blue line" running down south from a point on the west coast of the Gulf of Bahrein to parallel 20 degrees N., and a "violet line" thence to a place in the Aden Protectorate. It does not necessarily follow that the sovereignty of the Sheikh of Qatar and the other trucial rulers extends up to this boundary,



which must be regarded as constituting a British sphere of influence. This view, though strong in law, is unlikely to appeal to Ibn Saud, who has in fact exerted influence, if not authority, as well, east of the blue line. Any discussion with him might perhaps have been postponed, had not the United States Government made enquiries which caused His Majesty's Government to explain to them their view of the effect of the Anglo-Turkish conventions. This helped to decide the question of whether the views of His Majesty's Government should be conveyed to Ibn Saud, and afforded a means by which this could be done with the minimum appearance of provocation. On the 28th April His Majesty's Minister, acting under carefully concerted instructions, addressed a note to the Saudi Government informing them, as a matter of courtesy, of the enquiry by the United States Government, and the reply which had been returned.

78. There has been no development of importance in connexion with Ibn Saud's other frontiers. It may be noted, however, that one of the more notable visitors to the Hejaz for the pilgrimage was Fawwaz-bin-Shalan, grandson of and prospective successor to the famous Nuri of that ilk. It appears that he sat on the King's left at the pilgrimage banquet on the 22nd March (see paragraph 50 of the last report). It has been stated in the foreign Arabic press that his tribe, the Ruwalla, and other Syrian tribes have promised support to Ibn Saud on the northern side.

79. (Reference paragraph 52.) Ibn Saud has, however, manifested continued perturbation over the alleged machinations of plotters in adjoining countries. On the 10th April Sheikh Yusuf Yasin brought a message from him to Sir Andrew Ryan to the effect that he believed intrigues to be proceeding between King Ghazi, the Amir Abdullah, other Shereefs, and the Amir Shakir, to foment insurrection in Saudi Arabia, to which Sir Andrew Ryan was able to return a generally reassuring reply to Fuad Bey Hamza on the 21st April; the latter on that occasion produced a further story of activities on the part of a son of Hamid-bin-Rifada near Aqaba, about which enquiries were still proceeding at the end of the month.

### III.—Relations with Powers outside Arabia.

80. Excellent relations have continued to prevail between the British Legation and the Saudi Government. The question of the Indian Government dispensary has been discussed several times, and with some vigour, as Sheikh Yusuf Yasin rejected outright the possible settlement mentioned in paragraph 53 of the last report. A conversation with Fuad Bey Hamza on the 30th April gave more promise of an eventual solution.

81. A Royal Air Force "Victoria" aeroplane made a forced landing on Saudi territory west of Jinnah Island on the 17th April, and stuck in the sand. The matter was at once notified to the Saudi Government with an apology for the unintentional violation of their territory and a request for assistance. The apology was verbally accepted and the local authorities instructed to help; the Amir of Jubail, however, although most helpful, apparently misunderstood his instructions and detained the machine for two days, necessitating a further representation to the Government, before he would allow it to leave. The aeroplane finally left Saudi territory and reached Bahrein on the 23rd April; an expression of thanks for their assistance was subsequently conveyed to the Saudi Government.

82. All friendliness notwithstanding, Ibn Saud has conceived some apprehension as to the state of his relations with His Majesty's Government owing to the cumulative effect on his mind of various matters mentioned elsewhere in this report, like the "blue line note" mentioned in paragraph 77, and some of older date like the rapprochement between Great Britain and the Yemen. There is no foundation for his fear that the fundamental policy of friendship towards him has altered, although somewhat difficult questions call for solution.

83. The new Italian Chargé d'Affaires presented his credentials at the Jeddah branch of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on the 11th April, and was received the same morning by the King in the course of the usual series of audiences to foreign representatives. This procedure marked the difference between his status and that of the Persian Minister, who presented his letters to the King the same day.

84. Developments in the south have exacerbated the suspicion with which the Saudi Government view Italian policy in the Red Sea. It is very obviously pro-Imam, though not incorrect *vis-à-vis* Ibn Saud. On the 22nd April the Italian Chargé paid his first visit to Fuad Bey Hamza, and urged on behalf of his Government a peaceful settlement between the two rulers.

85. The Saudi Government are also somewhat suspicious of Egypt. The Egyptian consul is perhaps not the ideal person to improve relations. At the *Zem Zem* reception on the 22nd April (see paragraph 71 (c) above), he made a speech which appeared to contrast the new perfection of the Egyptian arrangements for transporting pilgrims by sea with the still imperfect arrangements for their comfort in the Hejaz. His remarks do not seem, however, to have been as pointed as they were reported in certain quarters to have been.

86. (Reference paragraph 56.) The ratifications of the Saudi-Afghanistan Treaty of the 5th May, 1932, were eventually exchanged in Mecca on the 1st April, and the treaty itself was published in the Mecca newspaper *Umm-al-Qura* of the 18th April. Despite the Saudi attitude towards its being signed in Mecca (see paragraph 211 of the Jeddah report for May-June 1932), it was found to contain an express provision for exchange of ratifications in Mecca, and it is possible that their disinclination to stand by this clause was responsible for the delay in exchanging the ratifications.

87. There is nothing else to record in this chapter, except that the Turkish Chargé went on leave, greatly rejoicing, on the 6th April.

### IV.—Miscellaneous.

88. The Commissioner of Port Sudan and Mrs. Redfern stayed at the Legation from the 12th to the 16th April. Mr. Redfern's visit afforded a useful opportunity for discussing various matters of common interest, notably certain questions connected with the scheme, which has come into operation this year, for the better regulation of the pilgrimage from Nigeria. He was presented to the King on the 13th April.

89. The Dutch engineer, M. Flieringa, who was one of the recent Dutch mission to the Yemen (paragraph 55 of the last report), outstayed his companions to make further researches in that country, including a visit to Salif. He eventually got back to Jeddah and left for Holland on the 6th April. M. Jacobs, who has for several years ably managed the "Dutch Bank," left Jeddah for good on the 20th April, giving place to a M. Entrop. Mr. J. A. Smith, the managing director of Messrs. Gellatly, Hankey's business in the Sudan, visited Jeddah from the 23rd to the 25th April. Mr. Bates, the ornithologist (paragraph 40 of the report for February), left on the 25th April, after having collected, in collaboration with Mr. Philby, some 300 specimens of Hejazi birds, representing something like 120 species.

90. The worst dust-storm of recent years raged in and around Jeddah, both by land and sea, on the 3rd April. Ships were unable to enter the port that day and the climatic conditions ashore were horrible. Two similar, but less unpleasant, days followed. On the third day, the 5th April, a great fire ravaged the African village outside the town, destroying in a few hours an estimated number of some 160 compounds each containing a number of huts. Many British subjects and protected persons were affected, but there was no loss of British life. The Saudi Government are always unsympathetic towards these poor, though industrious, Takrunis, as they are called. They have seemed inclined to push to oppressive lengths measures, legitimate in themselves, to restrict rebuilding close to the town walls.

91. The dispersal of the pilgrimage proceeded on normal lines throughout the month. As always, minor problems have arisen, but they have not presented serious difficulty. The Alexandria Quarantine Board declared the returning pilgrimage clean on the 9th April.

92. It looked at one moment as though the thirty-three motor pilgrims from India (paragraph 63 of the last report) might become a burden on the British Legation, as the pilgrims "were very unwilling" to trust themselves again to the contractors who had let them down so badly. Steps were taken to impress on the Saudi Government the view that they should deal with the matter, and it seems to have been adjusted somehow. The annual problem of ordinary destitutes remains.



93. The position as regards the manumission of slaves during the month was as follows:—

On hand at the beginning of the month: 1 male, 2 females, 1 child.  
Took refuge in April: 4 males, 1 female, 1 child.  
Manumitted in April and repatriated: Nil.  
Locally manumitted: Nil.  
Returned to Ibn Saud (see below): 1 male.  
On hand at the end of the month: 4 males, 3 females, 2 children.

94. A slave undoubtedly belonging to the King's household took refuge on the 11th April. This threatened to create a very difficult question, as the King still holds that he came to an oral understanding with Sir G. Clayton in 1927 that the Legation right of manumission should not be exercised in regard to his personal slaves and soldiers, while His Majesty's Government have, since 1931, refused to admit the proved existence of such an understanding. On this occasion it was possible to arrange a friendly deal, without prejudice to principles, under which the slave was returned to be manumitted by the King after an interval sufficient to save His Majesty's face, and to be then held at the disposal of the Legation. A guarantee of good treatment during the interval was obtained.

95. The Legation is still dealing with the very unusual case of a married couple with a child, who took refuge as slaves on the 29th March, but whom the authorities state to be free-born Moslems, the children by slave women of two brothers belonging to a Shereefian family.

[E 3551/3551/25]

No. 84.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 30.)*

(No. 135.)

Sir,

*Jedda, May 8, 1934.*

WITH reference to your printed despatch No. 290 of the 26th October, I have the honour to state that on the 30th April the Acting Saudi Minister for Foreign Affairs broached with me the question of the future of the Treaty of Jedda. Fuad Bey said that his Government had been considering the matter in view of the fact that the time when notice of denunciation might be given had passed. I reminded him that the effect of article 8 of the treaty was that it could be denounced at six months' notice on any date after the 17th March, 1934, not to prolong it for any definite period if it were not denounced. I intimated early in the conversation that, from a British point of view, the treaty had many defects, but that it had served its purpose and that His Majesty's Government were unlikely to wish to denounce it, although they would have several points to raise if a revision were necessitated by a Saudi denunciation.

2. Fuad Bey said that the Saudi Government did not wish to denounce the treaty but had considered three points connected with it, on which they might expect His Majesty's Government to meet them. The first was the final settlement of the Aqaba-Maan question. They did not, he said, think the present an appropriate time to reopen this. The second was the question of slavery. As I shall be reporting separately on this, I need only say here that Fuad Bey on this occasion seemed less disposed to press for the elimination of article 7 of the treaty, which could obviously not be removed without changing the structure of the treaty, than for the termination of the manumission system.

3. When I reminded Fuad Bey that he had spoken of a third point, he hedged, and left me in uncertainty as to whether he had been treating article 7 and manumission as two distinct points. On the 2nd May, however, when we were discussing my note of the 28th April, regarding the effect of the Anglo-Turkish Conventions of 1913 and 1914, he admitted with some coyness that the third point, which he had refrained from mentioning on the 30th April, related to article 6 of the treaty. He was most anxious to assure me that Ibn Saud had no desire to interfere with His Majesty's Government's special position in regard to the rulers mentioned in that article. Fuad Bey was, to use again the word I applied to this portion of the conversation in my telegraphic record, allusive. He gave me to understand that it rather suited the King than otherwise to have His Majesty's Government as a screen between him and the rulers in question,

but would like the position to be defined in some other way. Beyond emphasising the importance in the eyes of His Majesty's Government of their sphere in Eastern Arabia, I did not pursue this subject, which obviously falls to be dealt with at present as a matter arising out of the "blue line note," although, in this case, too, it would be impossible to give Ibn Saud what he wants without altering the structure of the Treaty of Jedda.

4. What it all comes to is that Ibn Saud is just now very anxious to stand well with His Majesty's Government for reasons connected more with the situation in the south-west of Arabia than with anything else. He has decided not to revert at present to the Aqaba-Maan question, but he likes to have it up his sleeve. He would go a long way, or might be led a long way by Fuad Bey, a modernist, in restricting slavery, if he could get rid of manumission. As regards article 6 of the treaty, he knows very well that His Majesty's Government are unlikely to abandon their position in regard to Koweit, Bahrein and the Trucial sheikhs, but he must consider his standing with Arabs and play for prestige. He would therefore like to see the British position defined in language more compatible with the phrase of his latest biographer, "Lord of Arabia, Ibn Saud." This feeling has naturally been stimulated by the discovery that His Majesty's Government regard him as lord of little more than half of Arabia, but so long as there is any chance of his improving the proportion by roping in the Yemen he will not show his hand too openly.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

[E 3552/1277/25]

No. 85.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 30.)*

(No. 136.)

Sir,

*Jedda, May 8, 1934.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 95 of the 7th March and previous correspondence relative to rumours of discussions having taken place in connexion with the Hejaz Railway, I have the honour to state that the Acting Saudi Minister for Foreign Affairs approached me definitely in conversation on the 30th April regarding the possibility of reconditioning this railway. He first referred to the circumstances of the breakdown of the Haifa Conference in August 1928, which was really due to the unwillingness of Ibn Saud, secretly disclosed by Sir G. Clayton, to pursue the matter at that time. The Saudi Government now thought, Fuad Bey said, that the time had come to reopen the subject. Among the reasons for this were the extremely tiresome treatment of travellers in Egypt and the stimulation of interest in railway enterprise in Syria and elsewhere.

2. Fuad Bey said that his Government contemplated a simultaneous approach to the British and French Governments in the form of an identic note. Before writing such a note, he would like to know how it was likely to be received. What his Government had in view was a discussion of practical ways and means, such as had been intended in 1928. They would put on one side, by simple reservation, any question regarding the ownership or character of the railway. I gathered that he foresaw no difficulty in bringing the French into a discussion on the lines indicated.

3. I expressed personal sympathy with the idea of making the line available for through communication, if only in the interest of pilgrims. There were, I said, undoubted signs of a tendency to revert to overland pilgrimage routes equipped with modern means of transport. I said that I had, however, no information as to the present attitude of the British authorities directly concerned. I promised to report to you by despatch and ask you, if possible, to let me know by telegraph whether His Majesty's Government would be prepared to entertain a proposal to discuss the matter, jointly with the French, on the lines Fuad Bey had indicated. I emphasised the fact that any reassertion of the Saudi view regarding the ownership and character of the line would make discussion impossible, and hinted that the particular suggestion that the line was a Waqf would be unfortunate. I did not exclude, as far as I was concerned, the possibility of shelving these issues by a reservation.



4. Fuad Bey did not represent the matter as one of great urgency, but I should like to be able to acquaint him with your views fairly soon, so that His Majesty's Government should not present the appearance of blocking the way.

I am sending a copy of this despatch to his Excellency the High Commissioner for Transjordan and His Majesty's consul-general at Beirut.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

[E 3764/722/25]

No. 86.

*Memorandum on Slavery in Saudi Arabia.*—(Communicated by Sir A. Ryan under cover of Jeddah Despatch No. 149 of May 15, 1934; Received in Foreign Office, June 1.)

#### I.—The General Question.

SLAVERY remains a live issue in the Arabia of to-day. Its roots lie in a prehistoric past. In this, as in other primitive countries, it no doubt originated in the warfare of early times, when victors first began to find the enslavement of the vanquished more profitable than their slaughter. From these beginnings the practice was perpetuated, as its advantages became manifest. Throughout the centuries Arab ways of life and thought have remained almost unaltered in fundamentals, despite innumerable political and quasi-political vicissitudes. The one great upheaval in their mentality resulted from the coming of Mahomet; but Mahomet found slavery so engrained in the life of his time as to be accepted as one fundamental to human society, and there is no evidence that he considered its abolition either possible or desirable. As a reformer and legislator it behoved him to regulate it on humane lines. Hence the Koran nowhere explicitly sanctions the institution, but contains many admonitions towards the humane treatment of slaves and exhortations towards performing the pious act of releasing them.

2. That slavery as an institution should have survived in Arabia up to the present time suggests that it must fit naturally into the Arab social system and must be in harmony with the Arab character. It would seem, on examination, to rest on three bases—social, religious and economic. These bases will be treated in the following sections.

#### The Social Basis.

3. The present kingdom of Saudi Arabia comprises many different elements, the three main divisions of which are the nomadic Bedouin population, which forms by far the largest part; the small colonies at the oases, composed of settlers who were formerly nomads; and the urban populations of the Hejaz towns of Mecca, Jeddah, Medina and Taif. The union of these diverse elements under one Government is an unnatural one; but they are alike in one respect, that of isolation from the modern world and their suspicion of outside influences.

4. The nomads—independent, egotistical, self-seeking, intensely proud of race and religion, and incapable of loyalty to more than their immediate family or tribal group—have retained intact since the days of Abraham their patriarchal social system. The ambition of each man is to become head of his group, and he is surrounded by a crowd of relatives and retainers to whom he can serve out bounties or blows at his will. The great man must maintain such an entourage if he is to keep his position against the rival groups which surround him; the poor man must put himself under the protection of a great one to protect himself. Such the system is in the desert, and slavery clearly fits naturally into it. By possessing his retainers outright the patriarch ensures that they shall not desert him at his hour of need; and the size of his retinue determines his importance. Moreover, the idea of slavery itself is in no way repugnant. Modern ideas reach the members of the community as far off and strange voices, wonderful, but having no relation to everyday life. Where all are bound by ties of fear and self-interest to one head and draw their subsistence from him, the idea of being owned by him is only one step further. For the blacks of another race who form the majority of slaves the state seems only natural.

5. In remoteness and in general outlook the people of the settlements differ little from the nomads from whose stock they come. The cities of the Hejaz are less remote from external ideas, of which they must receive a number from the ever-changing crowd of Moslem pilgrims, who come to the country from all

over the Islamic world, and their communities have a highly-developed civic sense, though the organisation of them is primitive. In their outlook, however, they differ little in certain essentials, of which slavery is one, from the nomads. The merchant-family system of the cities forms a parallel to the tribal system of the desert, and the fierce independence, self-centredness and narrowness of the Arab character is in their case augmented by an even greater pride in their religion, which makes them no less impermeable to and suspicious of any alien ideas. Throughout history the internal affairs of the Hejaz have been managed by Arabs, under whatever foreign domination they outwardly lay. Slavery was accepted by the Prophet and their fathers, and is a social convenience. Why, then, should they abandon it in deference to alien and occidental ideas?

#### The Religious Basis.

6. As indicated in paragraph 1, the Koran recognises slavery by inference, though regulating its operation. In a country like Saudi Arabia, where religion exercises, at least outwardly, a paramount influence on the lives and thought of the people, and where the established system of jurisprudence is the Sharia or religious law, such recognition must have a powerful effect. Examination of the Islamic law, however, suggests at least a doubt whether its sanction applies to the form of slavery existing in this country.

7. Under this law, adversaries in the proselytising wars of Islam were offered the choice of accepting Islam, paying tribute, or fighting to the death. When they accepted the third alternative and were captured, or the second and could not pay the tribute, but under no other circumstances, they could be enslaved. A strict application of this principle leads to the conclusion that no person originally a Moslem can be enslaved, and that persons captured in slave-raids, which can hardly be represented as proselytising wars, are illegally enslaved.

8. Against this, however, must be put the custom of centuries of slavery in its present form, which, like so many institutions in Islam, is buttressed by the fetvas in its support given forth from time to time by ulema. Ibn Saud, in 1926, admitted this, in conversation with the then British agent and consul (see Jeddah despatch No. 114 of the 28th September, 1926), stating that he was personally in favour of abolishing slavery, but that it was engrained in the customs of his people, and that any attempt on his part to put an end to it would involve him in a struggle with his subjects, while if he appealed for a religious ruling on the matter, he felt that he would raise an acrimonious debate which would in all probability end against him.

#### The Economic Basis.

9. Economically, slavery presents advantages which present-day conditions have but little diminished, although, as will be shown later, these conditions have tended to reduce its extent. While the Government and the religious law of the country remain favourable to the institution, the purchase of a slave represents a sound investment. It is here that Saudi Arabia differs so considerably from countries like the Sudan, where the existence of a Government hostile to slavery is tending to make the investment prohibitively risky. For the rich, a boy, bought young for a few pounds, will do the work of a servant for years, and will, moreover, do it better, for his future comfort will depend on satisfying his master, and he will become identified more than a servant with the fortunes of the house and family in which he serves. A girl will serve the purpose of both servant and helpmeet, and in the latter capacity presents an advantage, for marrying a wife necessitates the payment of a sum for dowry, which is irrecoverable if she is divorced. For the poorer classes, the slave of a family may earn enough for them to live on. The sudden abolition of slavery in the country would inflict financial loss, in many cases heavy, on the most influential section of the population, and would dislocate the social structure in a manner which would take long to repair.

#### Regulations governing Slavery.

10. In Appendix IV have been gathered some of the canons of Islamic law, according to the Hanafi school of theology, which bear on slavery. The details vary in the systems of the other three schools, but the principles are common to all. The main practical issues are the following.



11. A slave has no civil rights and is regarded as a piece of his master's property. He has no legal redress against his master for ill-treatment, and cannot run away without risk of apprehension and return to his master for a punishment which may vary from a warning, through increased work and less food, to hand-cuffing and beating according to the taste of the master and the frequency of the offence. He may buy and sell property, but such property as he buys is considered as belonging to his master, and anything he may earn is his master's unless the latter expressly allows him to keep it. A slave may be sold, or given as a present, or used as currency for a bet; it was related in 1931 how the King bet Sheikh Yusuf Yasin a young slave-girl if he would but pass the night with her in a reputedly haunted cave. He may marry a free or slave woman; though any children born of it are slaves of the woman's owner, while the marriage is automatically dissolved if one of the partners is sold elsewhere.

#### *Treatment of Slaves.*

12. There is thus ample scope for the ill-treatment of slaves. In practice, however, it seems clear that the generality of slaves enjoy treatment which is at least no worse than that habitually meted out by the strong to the weak in so primitive a society as that of Saudi Arabia. Brutal masters can and may ill-treat their slaves. A discontented slave has, however, the right to appeal to the administrative officer or the Sharia Court and demand to be sold to another master, which demand can only be resisted by a master strong enough to be above the law. In the vicinity of Jedda the presence of the Legation and the refuge it is known to afford to runaway slaves provides a salutary inducement to masters to content their slaves. Above these reasons, however, lie the many Koranic injunctions towards the humane treatment of slaves and the merit to be acquired by freeing them, which seem to induce in the average master a feeling of insecurity of tenure, of holding slaves "on sufferance" as Mr. Eldon Rutter puts it, which expresses itself in kindness and indulgence towards them.

13. Ibn Saud's own slaves, particularly his personal bodyguard, are the best example of well-treated and contented slaves, whose lot is the envy of most free tribesmen; so well provided are they with clothing and weapons, beyond which the Bedouin Arab has few desires. It must not, of course, be imagined that all slaves are in so happy a position. Amongst the average Bedouin of the desert, in particular, life is so hard and its standard so low that the lot of the slave, working all hours as herdsman, camel-driver, or porter, inadequately fed, and clothed in rags, cannot but be unpleasant; but here again the slave's lot is only that of the nomad, for where only the bare necessities of life exist all share them equally.

14. The way in which slavery is interpreted by the Arabs is, however, most strikingly exemplified in the smaller households of the towns. These households can only afford to keep one or two slaves, in the purchase of which a considerable part of the family fortunes are invested, to do the domestic work or to augment the family income by plying a trade outside. In such households the slave is treated simply as one of the family, eating the same food, wearing the same clothes as any member of it and sharing the fortunes of the family. The master will often concern himself closely with the slave's welfare, for example by having him taught to read and chant the Koran, by finding him a slave-wife, or by allowing him to keep some of his earnings so as eventually (see paragraph 21 (d) below) to purchase his freedom; and it is no uncommon thing for a slave to inherit some or all of his master's estate. After many years of service in one family such slaves are often awarded a position of great influence and authority, the younger members being taught to defer to them and the management of the family affairs or business being partly or entirely entrusted to them. It is particularly noticeable that such families regard the "honour" of their slave as their own. A Jedda family recently declined to give local manumission to their female slave, who had taken refuge in the Legation and wished to live on in Jedda as a free woman, on the grounds that their honour would suffer if she subsequently left the paths of virtue, and insisted that she should be sent out of the country. Such families make a point of maintaining their old slaves in comfort until they die; suggestions that old slaves are frequently "turned out to starve" are for the most part groundless, though it is true that old slaves sometimes fall on hard times when their master dies and the family breaks up. Two recent occurrences may, perhaps, be worth quoting as showing the way in which slaves become identified

with the interests of their master's families. In one case a former pilgrim-guide for Turkish pilgrims, ruined by the Turkish Government's veto on the performance of the pilgrimage by Turks, died in poverty in Jedda leaving a widow and adolescent daughter in charge of his old slave. The latter now supports the family by his earnings, has exerted himself to find a suitable husband for the daughter, and has in all respects taken over the position of headship of the family. In another case a rich shopkeeper of Mecca when dying left his entire estate to his slave and entrusted him with the care of his elderly invalid wife. The slave is now managing the business and devotedly nursing the widow.

#### *Female Slavery.*

15. The general treatment of female slaves merits separate consideration. Accurate information regarding it is difficult to come by in a country where women are rigorously secluded, and where even a conversational reference to the female side of a man's household is a social solecism. Distinction must be made at once between the female domestic slave and the "suriya" or concubine.

16. The former undoubtedly may be subject to worse treatment than a male slave. Ignorant and cut off from the world in the harem, she often fears the world outside, and in particular the prospect of being sent to a new country, too much to take the steps open to her to escape from ill-treatment, and may suffer from both her master and his free wives; it would seem, indeed, that a jealous or cruel mistress is more often than not the cause of a slave-girl's running away. She may be married at her master's will to a slave belonging to her own or another master, or, again, be separated from her slave-husband, and even her children, through her, or their, being sold to another master and being taken away to a different part of the country.

17. The position of the "suriya" is different. Promiscuous concubinage by a master among his female slaves, if it ever existed to any great extent, is largely a thing of the past. A slave-concubine may be kept nowadays either in addition to, or instead of, her master's regular wives. In the former case she is given separate quarters, for no wife would tolerate her close proximity; in the latter, she is mistress of her master's house, with all the rights and privileges of a wife, except that, until she has borne her master a child, and been in consequence freed (see paragraph 21 (e) below), she is liable to be sold at any time. Amongst the less well-to-do the latter type of concubinage, i.e., the keeping of a concubine to serve the purpose of a helpmeet, is still common, for a concubine, besides presenting the advantages of a wife and a servant, can be sold or otherwise got rid of at the man's pleasure, whereas a wife cannot be so divorced without the loss of the marriage gift. The former type seems to be becoming less common, partly through economic causes, partly because such small measure of emancipation as has penetrated into the harems of Saudi Arabia has made wives unwilling to tolerate it.

18. In general, the indications are that female slaves in this country receive, on the whole, no worse treatment than free women, always excepting their liability to forced marriage and to separation from their family by sale.

#### *Position of Slaves.*

19. Slave-origin is, in any case, neither a social barrier nor a bar to advancement in Saudi Arabia. One of the four recognised Saudi forces sent against the rebels of Ibn Rifada in 1932 was composed chiefly of the King's slave-bodyguard under a slave-commander, Helwan; the Amir of Bisk and more than one prominent notable of Jedda are ex-slaves. Amongst the commercial families of the Hejaz it is no uncommon thing to find a slave, freed or otherwise, managing the business. The guardians of the Kaaba at Mecca and of the Prophet's Tomb at Medina are at present eunuch slaves ("aghas"), so chosen that they may control crowds containing women without offending Moslem susceptibilities, though this race is now dying out and not being replaced.

#### *General Conclusions.*

20. It is clear from the preceding paragraphs that the form of domestic slavery practised in this country is, on the whole, an exceedingly mild one; it would seem, indeed, that the word "slavery" should not be applied to describe things so essentially different as the slavery of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and that



of present-day Arabia. The main objections to the latter, besides the habit of mind which the ownership of slaves inculcates in the master, seem to be the following: The spirit of complete dependence it inculcates in the slave, who becomes accustomed to being fed and clothed without special effort on his part, is helpless in the face of the world when freed or turned out on the death of his master, and has to turn to beggary as his only resource; the possibility which it affords for the ill-treatment of slaves if the master so desires; and the separation of slave-families by the sale of one of the members at the will of the master. The main proof of the mildness of the system is found in the observed fact that in every large household, particularly nowadays, are to be found freedmen who, after receiving their freedom, prefer to continue with their old masters in a state indistinguishable from slavery; that free slaves who have failed to earn a living elsewhere or have grown too old for work return to their old masters to be maintained till their death; and that, alternatively, masters in urgent need of service will apply to their freed slaves working elsewhere for help, which is seldom refused.

## II.—Special Aspects.

### Freeing of Slaves.

21. The Koran, as already noted in paragraph 1, urges the liberation of slaves on all Moslems as a pious act, and the Sharia law contains elaborate provisions for the contingencies which may arise from it. Under the law the following varieties of manumission are recognised:—

- (a) "Ataq," or simple manumission, without attached conditions, as an act of piety or bounty.
- (b) "Tadbir," where a master lays down that on his death his slave shall automatically be freed. Such a slave is known as a "mudabbar."
- (c) "Tausiya," where a master inserts a clause in his will recommending that a particular one of his slaves (who form part of his estate) shall be freed by his heirs.
- (d) "Kitaba." A very common form of manumission, under which a master agrees to free his slave on receiving a given sum, which the slave is allowed to amass by keeping back a fixed proportion of the wages or profits of his occupation (the balance of which, of course, reverts to his master). Such a slave is known as a "mukatib."
- (e) "Istilad" (for female slaves only). This is the well-known form, universally practised, whereby a female slave giving birth to a child of which the master admits paternity is automatically freed, while her child is born in freedom. The woman is then known as "umm walad," literally "mother of offspring."

22. Under any of the first four forms the actual act of manumission may be performed either by the master declaring before four witnesses that his slave is free, in which case no manumission document is drawn up; or else by the master obtaining a document of manumission from the local Sharia Court at a cost of some 7s. 6d. and presenting it to the slave. (A translation of a typical document of manumission is attached (Appendix III<sup>(\*)</sup>.)

23. Manumission by the British Legation is discussed in paragraphs 67–73 below. Where the Legation arranges for the local manumission by a master of a slave who has taken refuge in it, the latter course, *i.e.*, the making out of a legal manumission document, is always insisted upon.

24. The total number of slaves freed annually under these systems must be large, though it cannot be estimated. The purchase and freeing of slaves by pilgrims visiting the Hejaz, formerly of frequent occurrence, is now less common, though still practised by well-to-do Indians and others. Only old slaves are, as a rule, purchased for the purpose. After being freed, they sometimes accompany their liberators to their country of origin, sometimes remain in the Hejaz, supporting themselves as best they may, or, more frequently, receiving remittances from their liberators. The ex-Sultan of Muscat, who made the pilgrimage this year, freed one slave and took him back with him to his home in India.

(\*) Not printed.

### Occupations.

25. Slavery in Saudi Arabia is almost exclusively of the type generally known as "household," as opposed to "industrial." The latter type is understood to exist in the pearl-fisheries and date-gardens of the Persian Gulf, notably in the Trucial Coast and Oman, and it is probable that it is practised to some extent in the Hasa Province of Ibn Saud's dominions.

26. "Household" slaves are used for two main purposes: to perform menial and domestic service, and to make money for their master by plying a trade or occupation. The former purpose is more usual; in the towns a large proportion of the male, and almost all the female, household servants are slaves, while in the desert slaves are used for household work and as shepherds, camel-drivers and agricultural labourers; many dhow-masters have slave-crews. To make money for their owners slaves are sent out as water-carriers, porters, shop-boys, and fishermen, while some are taught a more skilled occupation. The table of occupations included in the manumission analysis (Appendix I) fairly reflects the diversity of occupations and the predominance of purely domestic pursuits amongst slaves.

27. Female slaves are exclusively used for harem service and for concubinage; a few, usually West Africans, are sent out to work, either as water-sellers, who parade the street balancing a petrol-tin full of water on their heads, or else as washerwomen, cooks, &c.

28. Ibn Saud, in particular, uses slaves for every possible purpose inside and outside his palace; he is said never to use eunuchs, but to use male slaves for certain domestic duties, even in the harem, so sure of them—and of the harem—is he.

### Number of Slaves in Saudi Arabia.

29. Ibn Saud, asked by Mr. Philby his opinion about a year ago as to the number of slaves in his dominions, estimated it at between 25,000 and 40,000, the latter being an upper limit. Four independent persons associated with the traffic of slaves in Mecca, and therefore to a certain extent competent to judge, have agreed on 40,000, divided as follows:—

Mecca	...	...	...	...	3,000
Jedda	...	...	...	...	1,000
Rabigh	...	...	...	...	500
Wejeh, Yanbu, other North Hejaz ports, Taif and Medina	...	...	...	...	500
Qunfida, Birk, Jizan and other Asiri ports	...	...	...	...	10,000
Amongst Hejazi Bedouin	...	...	...	...	5,000
Amongst Nejdi Bedouin	...	...	...	...	20,000
					<hr/> 40,000

Amongst the Bedouin paid servants are almost unknown and slaves fill all menial positions. Medina, formerly a great centre for slaves, has suffered so severely from poverty and depopulation lately that its holding of slaves is now negligible; Taif was denuded of slaves by Ibn Saud when he sacked it in 1924. The number in Jedda remains relatively small, through the uncertainty of tenure imbued in the minds of owners by the presence of the Legation and its right of manumission. On the other hand, South Hejaz and Asiri ports, being places at which most batches from Africa were formerly disembarked, contain a disproportionately large number.

30. These figures must be accepted with the greatest reserve, particularly that relating to Nejd, for statistics are unknown in this country and Arab powers of accurate observation are notoriously weak. Computation is also rendered more difficult by the number of ex-slaves who, after being freed by their masters, continue to live with them in a state indistinguishable from slavery and by the complete seclusion of women. Nevertheless, the figures show sufficiently clearly that European press allegations of widespread slavery in this country are much exaggerated.

31. The number of slaves, which has been diminishing for many years, has tended to decrease still further during the last two or three years, because few slaves are being imported from outside and the number of children born in slavery is insufficient to compensate for the considerable number of slaves dying or being



freed by the various means discussed in paragraphs 21-23 above. This decrease must not be attributed to any lessening of the desire of the people to possess slaves. Its causes are almost exclusively economic. The internal security produced by Ibn Saud's rule has rendered needless the heavy slave-bodyguards formerly required for protection, and has enabled notables to reduce their retinues to as small a size as is conformable with their dignity; while the development of motor transport has destroyed the occupation of many camel-owners, formerly owners of large numbers of slaves, and caused a dispersion of their holding. But, above all these, the world crisis, by reducing the number of overseas pilgrims to a figure so low as to be without recent precedent (except in 1925) during the last two years, has correspondingly diminished the revenues of the Hejaz, while the policy pursued by Ibn Saud's Government of collecting and remitting the bulk of these revenues to Nejd has still further impoverished the people of the Hejaz. Hence the lack of demand for new slaves, which, more than any other cause, has stifled the slave trade. Nejd seems to have suffered relatively less than the Hejaz, some of the revenues of which have found their way, in the form of bounties from the King, into the hands of most Nejd chieftains, and a certain flux of slaves from the Hejaz into Nejd has been noticeable of late. The tendency of Hejazi wives to revolt against concubinage, already noted, may also in some small degree affect the extent of female slavery.

#### Race.

32. The slaves of Saudi Arabia are for the most part of Sudani, Abyssinian, West African, or Yemeni origin; they are mostly black-complexioned Hamites, though a number of Yemenis, particularly females, are fair-complexioned, and this number is said at the present to be on the increase. The analysis of the manumissions practised by the Legation in the years 1926-33, attached to this memorandum, shows that all but twenty of the 209 slaves dealt with belong to the first three categories. Pure Arabs, and other races found in any numbers in the Hejaz, such as Javanese, Indians, Syrians and Malays, will not accept slavery. The number of black slave-women and the freedom with which cohabitation has been practised with them in the past is shown by the frequent occurrence of dark complexions and other negroid characteristics amongst members of prominent families in the country.

33. Of these races only the Sudanis and some of the West Africans have any connexion with the British Empire. A list of the tribes to which the Sudani and West African slaves manumitted since 1926 have claimed to belong is attached (Appendix V).<sup>(1)</sup> Amongst those classed as "Sudanis," a predominance of Nubawis is noticeable; a natural corollary to the extensive slave-raiding in the Nuba mountains, which is known to have taken place at one time.

34. A more detailed analysis of the origin of slaves in this country is impossible to undertake. The Legation has no facilities for examining any slaves other than those taking refuge in it, and could not do so without increasing suspicion of interference; whilst the slaves who take refuge, as is clear from the attached analysis, have nearly all been enslaved since childhood, and usually have the haziest of recollections of their original surroundings.

#### Sources of Supply.

35. Five sources are known to have supplied the market for slaves in Saudi Arabia in the past. These are as follows:—

- (i) Breeding from existing slave stock.
- (ii) Capture and enslavement of pilgrims or other visitors to the Hejaz.

#### Importation of slaves from—

- (iii) The Yemen itself.
- (iv) The Persian Gulf.
- (v) Across the Red Sea, through the Yemen, Asir or South Hejaz.

#### (i) Breeding from existing Slave Stock.

36. As mentioned in paragraph 31, economic pressure has much reduced the demand for slaves. All indications suggest that at present the supply of

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

slaves is confined almost entirely to (i) and (iii) above. (i) "Muwalid" (singular, "muwallad"), or the children of a marriage between two slaves, are themselves slaves, belonging, in the case where the parents belong to different owners, to the mother's owner. They have always formed a considerable proportion of the total number of slaves in the country, and used to be specially prized, because, having grown up in the country, they were often more capable of performing their duties than imported slaves. It is "muwalid" who have most frequently risen to posts of honour or become rich and influential in the service of some family.

#### (ii) Enslavement of Pilgrims, &c.

37. The capture of small parties of pilgrims or travellers in the country by bands of marauding Bedouin, and their subsequent sale into slavery by their captors, was of frequent occurrence up to the first year of Ibn Saud's rule in the Hejaz. The strength of his rule, his severe discouragement of this type of banditry, the development of motor transport for pilgrims, and the repression of pedestrianism for them, and the "Koshan" control-system on the roads, have combined to stamp it out almost completely, though very rarely an instance is reported of the disappearance of a pilgrim on the roads, which may possibly indicate his capture by neighbouring Bedouin.

38. The sale by pilgrims of children and other persons whom they bring to the Hejaz specially for the purpose may occasionally occur. Ibn Saud has, however, taken measures against the practice, as being one decidedly contrary to Islamic law (no sanction existing for the enslavement of a Moslem), and a sale would necessitate a conspiracy of silence between seller, his pilgrim-guide, broker and buyer, with the distinct risk of the latter losing his money by confiscation of the slave through the sale being found out. Moreover, the only races susceptible of being enslaved, of which any large numbers make the pilgrimage, are Yemenis, Abyssinians, Sudanese and British West Africans. The first two, it is true, are subject to no effective passport or other control while in this country. Sudanese, however, are canalised through Suakin, and are controlled by a system of pilgrim-passes, which permits of their numbers being checked on the inward and outward journeys. Nigerians formerly roamed almost unchecked on foot across the breadth of Africa to the Hejaz, some coming via the Sudan, but the majority taking advantage of the laxity of the Italian authorities in Eritrea, and crossing the Red Sea in dhows from Massawa to the Asiri coast, thence reaching Mecca on foot. Efforts have been made by His Majesty's Government for several years to combat the latter traffic, in particular, the Italian Government's attention was drawn rather forcibly to its undesirability at last October's meeting of the International Health Office at Paris. Even if this should fail to produce the desired effect, it is hoped that a system of pilgrim passports, similar to the Sudanese which has been instituted this year, with a view to the canalisation of the Nigerian pilgrimage the whole way from Nigeria to Mecca and back through Suakin and this Legation, will enable these pilgrims to be kept track of and prevented from crossing by dhow from Massawa. Even at present they are controlled while in the country by their tribal sheikhs, with whom the Legation is in touch, who are well aware of its views on the subject of slavery, and whose mutual jealousy would be likely to produce a prompt report to the Legation of any such sale if it became known.

39. These measures of control cannot prevent the occasional sale of a woman or child, the victim being subsequently reported dead, but they clearly combine with the Saudi control indicated above to reduce this traffic to negligible proportions. Four cases of alleged enslavement, involving five persons, have come to the notice of the Legation in the past three years, three of the persons concerned being Abyssinians and the other two Nigerians. The alleged victims were in all cases women or boys. In three cases the investigation which the Legation was able to conduct failed to substantiate the accusations, and suggested that they were inspired by malice. In the other case, one of two boys said to have been brought on pilgrimage by an Abyssinian merchant and sold for £80 the two in Mecca, actually took refuge in the Legation, while the other was, on the representations of the Legation, taken from his master and sent to the Legation for disposal by the Saudi authorities. Both were subsequently repatriated, and the buyers were left mourning for their money, as the Ethiopian Government



failed to trace the seller. An element of doubt, however, existed even here, for it is no uncommon thing in this country for two persons to obtain money on false pretences from a third, by one of them passing off the other as his slave and selling him to an unsuspecting third party, after which the "slave" runs away and shares the proceeds of the sale with the seller.

(iii) *Imports from the Yemen.*

40. A small but steady flow of slaves overland from the Yemen itself to the Hejaz continues, and now forms almost the whole of the importation of slaves from outside the country. The continuance of this supply results from two causes. The journey is a comparatively easy one, and is unimpeded by any official control, except on the frontier, where, according to Fuad Bey Hamza, the importer is compelled to produce a declaration, with photograph attached, that his slave has grown up in slavery. The average price of the slaves is also low, in common with that of all commodities in the Yemen, where taxation is said to be light and the general standard of life primitive, and has recently been rendered even more so by the desire of the Yemeni camel-drivers, who are large slave-owners and have been hit by trade depression, to reduce their stock of slaves.

(iv) *Imports from the Persian Gulf.*

41. Importations into Arabia from across the Persian Gulf, and in particular from Persian Makran, were stated by the late Sir H. V. Biscoe in 1930 to form a "steady trickle," but he suggested that the slaves were mostly absorbed in the Oman date gardens and Bahrein pearl fisheries, and that slaves came also from Nejd to these points. No recent information is available, but the probabilities are all against any steady flow of slaves into Saudi Arabia from this direction; it is, indeed, far more likely that the movement is, if anything, the other way and that slaves are sent out of Nejd to the pearl fisheries and date gardens mentioned above.

42. Importations of girls from Malay, Java and the Far East, mentioned in paragraph 49 of Mr. Bond's memorandum of 1930, have ceased entirely; the only case of which any evidence exists is that of the Sheybi, the Keeper of the Keys of the Kaaba, who apparently developed an exotic taste in Chinese girls and imported three or four some years ago.

*The Red Sea Slave Trade.*

43. This trade, once of considerable extent, has of late years dwindled to insignificance, but continues to attract an exaggerated amount of attention through periodic journalistic outbursts.

44. Its former importance, in the days of slave-raiding in the Sudan and before His Majesty's Government started active measures for its suppression in the Red Sea, is clearly shown from many sources. Jedda despatch to the Foreign Office, Slave Trade No. 8, of the 14th May, 1879, speaks of over 700 slaves having been landed near Jedda in the first half of that month alone, despite the anti-slavery edicts of the Porte. More striking, because more recent, testimony is afforded by the manumission analysis forming appendix 1 to this memorandum. Of 209 slaves manumitted by this Legation between 1926 and 1933, 171, of which all but one or two were Africans, had been kidnapped and enslaved during childhood in their country of origin. Almost all had thus been brought across the Red Sea by slave-traders. The following are the histories of two cases, taken at random from the Legation records:—

(a) Abyssinian (Kaffa), about 17 years old. He could no longer remember the name of his original village in Abyssinia, from which he was captured by slave-traders when he was young (say, about 1916) and sent up to Addis Ababa to be the slave of a Christian notable. He was captured in the streets of Addis Ababa by the servants of another well-known man, who sent him blindfolded and manacled into the Danakil country and sold him to a slave-trader. The latter brought him to Tajura and thence by sanbuq to Medi, in the Yemen, where he was sold to a Syrian merchant. He was subsequently brought to Mecca and sold to a Mecca resident, from whose home he fled to the Legation.

(b) From Wadai (French Equatorial Africa) aged about 40; his father was a Moslem. He lost his mother when an infant, and was placed by his father in the charge of a step-mother. When he was about 10 his father went off raiding westwards, and a party of the Shaygi tribe from the Sudan raided the village and captured him and several other boys and girls. They took him to Dar Sila and sold him to a Bornawi, who marked him with the Bornu tribal marks, brought him to Suakin, and embarked for Jedda with him in a steamer, representing him as one of his family. He reached Jedda about 1908; he was at once sold to a merchant of Jedda, who later sold him to a Mecca merchant. When the latter died, the slave was inherited by the brother of the merchant, and was sold three more times in Jedda and Mecca before he finally ran away to take refuge in the Legation, because his last master (a brother of Ibn Saud) had beaten and imprisoned him for no apparent reason.

45. Case (a) above is absolutely typical of the majority of cases which come to the notice of the Legation; case (b) was at one time common, but is nowadays almost non-existent owing to the increased surveillance exercised at Suakin and the suppression of slave-raiding in the Sudan.

46. There is no uncertainty as to the manner in which the slave-trade from Abyssinia to Arabia has been carried on in the past; information on the subject furnished by British authorities at Aden, Jibuti, and Addis Ababa and collected by successive senior naval officers in Red Sea sloops all bear out what is elicited by this Legation from the examination of runaway slaves. In the districts remote from Addis Ababa, slave-raiding on a large scale has been, and still is, practised. Some of the products of such raids used to fall into the hands of slave-exporters, usually Danakil. They were brought in caravans to places on the African coast, mostly in the vicinity of Tajura in French Somaliland; other places mentioned in this connexion are Awsa, Dubab, Ras Dumiera, Rashaliah, Gozayera, and Labatella (beyond Ras Bir, in the Gulf of Tajura). Thence the slaves were embarked in sanbuqs and eventually landed at various spots on the Arabian coast between Qunfidha and Hudeyda, usually in the vicinity of Birk, Medi and Lith. They were thence taken overland to Mecca.

47. The naval action undertaken in the Red Sea by His Majesty's and other Governments to suppress this traffic is described in paragraphs 65 and 83 below. For twelve years it has been unattended by any actual success in the shape of the capture of a slaver; on occasion slaves have been found on board sanbuqs when searched, but have without exception proved to be persons belonging to the owner of the sanbuq and forming part of its crew, and not newly-enslaved persons being taken to Arabia for sale. This lack of success is easily understood. The area of sea to be patrolled by one or two ships is large, and most of it is shallow water, infested with reefs, in which the sloops cannot operate. The points where slaves are supposed to leave the African coast are all in French or Italian territorial waters, which British vessels cannot police and which are usually unpatrolled by the ships of these navies. The width of the narrow part of the Red Sea is small, and with a fair wind dhows can cross in a few hours; they are believed to operate largely under cover of night and in conjunction with an efficient intelligence service which gives them early warning of sloop movements. If challenged by a sloop they can slip amongst reefs where the sloop cannot follow and can outsail any boats carried by the sloops. The latter are unassisted by any organised intelligence service, and an occasion, in 1930, when His Majesty's Minister in Addis Ababa was able to give advance information of the despatch of a convoy of slaves to Tajura by rail, has remained an isolated instance, which led to no useful result. Finally, it is probable that the trade, if it exists at all, is now confined to children. Most native vessels when searched are found to contain many children, ostensibly the family of the owner, but interrogation of them is difficult and the obtaining of positive evidence as to their origin or status almost impossible.

48. Were it considered that the trade still flourished, the above measures of control would doubtless be deemed inadequate, and some of the several suggestions put forward in Mr. Bond's memorandum, the present position in regard to which is discussed in paragraph 93 below, would merit adoption. Such, however, is far from being the case. All the evidence gathered in this



country bears out the opinion of the naval authorities and of the British authorities at Jibuti and Aden, that the trade is at a standstill, and that, nowadays, few, if any, slaves are brought across the Red Sea. During the last eight years of Ibn Saud's régime, no direct evidence whatsoever has reached the Legation that the traffic continues or that any slaves are in fact imported, the only indications of it being from hearsay. It is particularly noticeable that during that period not one single slave who had undoubtedly been recently imported has taken refuge in the Legation, although such slaves, if such there be, would presumably be the most anxious of all slaves to regain their freedom. For this one cause is in the main responsible. The present lack of demand in Saudi Arabia, the reasons for which have been sufficiently dwelt on above, has done more than any naval or Saudi action, however effective, to suppress the trade. The subject is further dealt with in paragraph 66 below.

#### *Ibn Saud's Attitude.*

49. No indications suggest that Ibn Saud has modified his 1930 attitude towards slavery and towards His Majesty's Government's position in regard to manumission. That attitude, as described in Mr. Bond's memorandum, was briefly as follows: He himself was prepared in principle to abolish slavery in his dominions. It was, however, a habit engrained amongst his people, and an attempt on his part to do away with it at one stroke would involve him in a struggle which would weaken his authority. An appeal for a religious prohibition would merely rouse an acrimonious controversy. He had, therefore, to proceed by stages, the first of which was the prohibition of slave imports and the betterment of the conditions of those already in slavery. While His Majesty's Government maintained their right of manumission, he could undertake no more coercive measures on his subjects.

50. Fuad Bey Hamza stated in July 1930 that the King had, in fact, expressly forbidden the import of slaves by any of "his" ports, and had ruled that any person importing slaves by land, *e.g.*, from the Yemen, should furnish a declaration that they had been born in slavery; while Sheikh Yusuf Yasin in 1931 confirmed Ibn Saud's prohibition on imports of slaves, and added that he had taken measures to prevent the enslavement of pilgrims within the country, as being contrary to religious law (*cf.* paragraph 7); and it was noticeable in 1932 that the local authorities, when cross-examining an Abyssinian accused by the Legation of having sold two boys into slavery, asked him the question: "Did you not know that the sale of slaves from abroad is forbidden, except with a permit from the Government?" The letters annexed to the Italian Treaty (Appendix VII) also contain a categorical statement of the Saudi position in this respect. On the other hand, the judge of the Mecca Sharia Court is reported to have recently refused to entertain an application by a slave for recognition of his free status, on the ground that Royal commands had forbidden the court to hear any case of alleged illegal enslavement of a Moslem if the enslavement were more than twenty years old.

51. There is little evidence either for or against Fuad Bey's statement recorded above. The import of slaves by Jedda, and probably by any Hejazi port, has ceased; but as previously shown the bulk of the trade has always come by way of either Asiri ports, to which Fuad Bey's statement, made before Asir was formally incorporated in Ibn Saud's dominions, may not necessarily have applied, or Yemeni ports. The southern coast of the Hejaz and of Asir are long, solitary and unguarded, and afford landing-places for dhows almost anywhere. The frontier with the Yemen is equally unguarded, and is largely uninhabited desert. However strict Saudi regulations might be, opportunities for evading them by smuggling must be legion; while the morality of the Saudi officials is not such as to preclude the possibility of connivance on their part. It was, for example, reported from naval sources in April 1932 that the Amir of Jizan had listened sympathetically to suggestions that he should encourage and facilitate a revival of the slave trade. The lack of demand in the country, far more than any regulations Ibn Saud may have made, is probably responsible for the undoubted decline of the slave trade.

52. Personally, Ibn Saud and his family remain, as formerly, the largest slave-owners in the country, the King's holding alone being estimated at 3,000, 1,200 of them being recent purchases and the rest "muwalid." It could hardly

be otherwise. Public opinion, which he has done nothing to change, still measures a ruler's power by the number of his followers, and Ibn Saud, to maintain his prestige, must still show visible signs of such power. Hence his personal slave bodyguard, arrogant, well provided with food, clothes, and even money, well contented with their lot, and forming a striking contrast in apparel, weapons and general demeanour to his free lower-class subjects. His aspirations, expressed half-jokingly to the Indian vice-consul in one of their numerous conversations in 1926, to enslave all West Africans in the country in order to improve their lot, is hardly unreasonable.

53. Ibn Saud's attitude towards manumission of slaves by foreign Powers in his dominions has become no more favourable, but rather less so, since he most unwillingly conceded the addition of the letters continuing the existing right of manumission on the part of this post to his treaty of 1927 with His Majesty's Government (see Appendix VI). He and his advisers tend more and more to regard the continuance of their right as the one breach in that independence which the Treaty of Jedda confirmed and which every year since has consolidated; and his successful resistance to the insertion of any slavery clause whatsoever in his 1931 treaty with France, or of more than a reaffirmation of his determination to co-operate against the slave trade in his 1932 treaty with Italy (see Appendix VII and paragraphs 80 and 81 below) can only have strengthened that attitude.

54. So far as manumission by the Legation of slaves belonging to his subjects is concerned, he must be admitted to have held by the treaty. Control on the roads and at the entrance to Jedda has, it is true, been tightened up of recent years, so that a runaway slave has more difficulty than formerly in reaching the Legation to take refuge. The effects of the development of motor transport, which might have facilitated flight by slaves from the interior, has been neutralised by the rigid system of koshan, or toll control, on the main roads. Ordinary slaves who have succeeded in taking refuge have, however, usually been allowed to leave the country, on being repatriated by the Legation, without more than customary obstruction on the part of the local authorities. Occasional attempts by the latter to delay the departure of a slave or to force his appearance before the local Sharia Court on some charge, such as that of having decamped with property belonging to his master, have soon been abandoned on being resisted by the Legation.

#### *Royal Slaves.*

55. This rule of acquiescence on the part of Ibn Saud and his Government has, however, had certain notable exceptions. On various occasions since 1927 when "Royal" slaves, *i.e.*, slaves belonging to the King or his immediate relatives, have sought refuge in the Legation, Ibn Saud has manifested extreme hostility to the exercise by the Legation of its rights of manumission and repatriation. His attitude in this respect has been based on a verbal modification which he contended had been arrived at between Sir Gilbert Clayton and himself, as a rider to the letters on manumission annexed to the Treaty of Jedda. Sir Gilbert, it was averred, had agreed, in response to the King's pressing request, that the King's own so-called slaves, who were in reality private servants and soldiers, should be refused manumission by the Legation if they ran away and applied for refuge in it. The Foreign Office records of the negotiations do not, in fact, contain any record of Sir G. Clayton having conceded the point, though they state (see "Eastern Print," Vol. XX of 1927, p. 78) that "an agreement was reached on the question of manumission" at a private meeting on the afternoon of the 16th May, 1927, after Ibn Saud had pressed his point about his personal servants and soldiers at an official meeting in the morning. The archives of this post before it became a Legation in 1930 likewise provide no record of the alleged agreement, though a belief seems to have existed here between 1927 and 1930 that some special arrangement in respect of royal slaves existed, and the first known case of the kind, which arose in 1928 or 1929 and is inadequately recorded here, formed the subject of a friendly deal between the then British representative and the slave's owner, a member of the suite of the Amir Feisal.

56. The cases which have arisen since 1930 fall under three heads: (i) Slaves of members of the King's family; (ii) slaves who fled from the house of the King's Finance Minister, Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman, but whom the King



claimed as his own on the ground that they were slaves of his, not in immediate demand, whom he had placed with Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman for custody or disposal; and (iii) slaves undoubtedly belonging to the King's household. The first such case, which served to define the issue without bringing it to a head, and the second, which precipitated the whole difference, both concerned slaves in category (ii). The former occurred in 1930, and was reported in Jedda despatch No. 187 of the 23rd July of that year. The slave in question had already been manumitted by the Legation, and, with the knowledge and consent of the local authorities, placed on board an Italian ship for repatriation via Massawa to his Abyssinian home, before the Government laid claim to him for the reasons indicated above. The case was not, however, pursued, as the King himself was prevailed upon to realise the undesirability of insisting upon a public disembarkation of the slave. The latter, the famous Bekhit case, occurred in the beginning of 1932. This time the Saudi Government acted before the slave had been manumitted. They again, and this time most categorically, invoked the alleged Clayton agreement referred to above. His Majesty's Government took the view that, even if Bekhit were owned by the King and even if the existence of the oral agreement were admitted (an admission they refused to make), he could not be held to be covered by it. After some sharp exchanges with the Saudi Government, the slave was embarked, in the face of their declared opposition, but, fortunately, without the necessity for a resort to force, in H.M.S. *Penzance*, which was fortuitously visiting Jedda at the time. The affair produced serious repercussions lasting over a period of several months, but no solution of the problem.

57. Two cases under category (i) in paragraph 56 subsequently occurred. Later in 1932 a slave of the King's brother Muhammad took refuge and was claimed by the authorities under the alleged Clayton agreement, but was allowed to leave the country after being manumitted by the Legation when His Majesty's Government pointed out that even the Saudi version of the agreement did not represent it as covering slaves of other members of the Royal family. Early in 1934 a slave-girl belonging to the King's second son, Feisal, took refuge in a fit of pique, and Fuad Bey Hamza asked His Majesty's Minister to "find a solution," but the girl solved the problem herself by leaving the Legation premises of her own accord and returning to slavery, the somewhat Spartan accommodation provided there being far below her ideas of comfort. Finally, in April 1934, occurred the first recorded case under category (iii), when a slave from the King's personal bodyguard, an Abyssinian who had been an unusually short period in the country, took refuge during one of the King's visits to Jedda. In view of His Majesty's Government's disinclination to recognise the existence of the alleged Clayton agreement, under which the Saudi Government, of course, at once claimed the man, the case at one time suggested a repetition of the Bekhit incident, but a compromise was finally agreed upon by which the man was formally handed back to the authorities, under the King's personal guarantee of good treatment, on the understanding that he would be retained for about a fortnight and then manumitted by the King and either returned to the Legation for repatriation or placed on board a ship for Port Sudan. Thus was liquidated the most recent of these incidents, which show most clearly the extent to which the King's morbid concern for his independence aggravates his jealousy of the exercise of foreign right of manumission on his soil. A final solution of the Royal slave question, as of the more general slave question, is still to seek.

#### *Sale of Slaves.*

58. The majority of the sales of slaves take place in the towns, particularly Mecca. Slaves, when imported from the Yemen or elsewhere (see paragraphs 40 and 43), are usually taken direct to Mecca, as this town provides the best market for them and they are, in addition, less liable to escape and take refuge in the British Legation.

59. Open slave-markets have been much limited in extent of recent years, through lack of purchasing power and perhaps fear of scandal. The "Dekka," or open slave-market of Mecca, still exists in the form of a small shop in a side-lane off the Suweyqa or main shopping quarter of the town. A master desiring a quick sale of a slave will send him there for exhibition, or a dissatisfied or ill-treated slave desiring a change of master can run away to the Dekka and

demand to be sold, which the master (unless he be a person of exceptional power and influence) cannot, by custom, refuse. A member of the Legation staff, who visited this Dekka on the 2nd March last found ten male and seven female slaves exhibited there. Usually, however, in Mecca, and always in Jedda, sales are effected, little less publicly, in the houses of the slave-brokers. Many of the latter exist in Mecca and Jedda, the names of six in Jedda being known to the Legation, a Hadhrami, a Hejazi Bedouin, an Italian Somali, and three natives of Jedda. The intending purchaser gets into touch with one of these brokers and visits his house, where he is shown the slaves for sale and allowed to examine them; female slaves are exhibited sufficiently scantily clad to enable him to judge their physical development. After agreement as to the price the sale is usually completed by the execution of a document of sale before two witnesses; occasionally by a document obtained from the Sharia Court proving ownership.

60. Such sales, however, though formerly common, have been rendered much less so by the deadness of the market. The majority of middle-aged slaves manumitted by the Legation in the past three years have had three or more owners. The Sheikh Ad Dallalin or chief broker of Mecca, however, stated recently that 1,000 sales in Mecca were registered in his records of 1930, but scarcely 100 in 1933. In Medina there are said to have been only ten sales last year, and the Dekka there is closed.

61. Ibn Saud's large stock of slaves is obtained either by purchases in the open market or by gifts from notables. The latter practice is fairly common, both with a view to currying favour with the King, and also because His Majesty's custom is almost invariably to recompense such a gift with another of greater price. Slave-brokers were at one time eager to give him, or members of the Royal family, first refusal of any new slaves who might have come into their hands, but are nowadays inclined to fight shy because, although the prices offered by the Royal personages are always good, their actual payment is entrusted to the Minister of Finance, Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman, who is notoriously and increasingly dilatory in settlement. Once finished with they are given as presents to notables or handed over to Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman for disposal, but are said to be never again sold; though a person receiving one and not needing him can return him to the King.

#### *Prices.*

62. The following table of current prices of slaves in Mecca shows plainly the great depreciation in the value of slaves which has taken place in the last three years:—

Type of Slave.	1930-31 Prices.	1933-34 Prices.
	£ (gold).	£ (gold).
(1) Town-trained, young (age 1-14, either sex)	30-40	15-25
Full-grown (age 15-45, male) ...	50-70	20-30
Marriageable girls ...	80-150	35-50
Old (age 45 upwards, either sex) ...	15-20	5-10
(2) Bedouin (country-trained) ...	Roughly half the above prices.	

63. These prices, though obtained from the head broker of Mecca, must be accepted with some reserve, as present sales are few and the value of each slave clearly depends greatly on their physical attributes and accomplishments. The fourth class of slave, those over 45 years of age, are seldom bought except for the purpose of freeing them (see paragraph 24).

#### *III.—Action by His Majesty's Government.*

64. During the past three years the action taken by His Majesty's Government in connexion with Arabian slavery has consisted of two parts: (i) The maintenance of the naval patrol in the Red Sea, and (ii) the maintenance of the right of manumission by the British Legation, Jedda, of slaves who take refuge in it.



### Naval Action.

65. Two British sloops are maintained in the Red Sea. Allowing for visits to the north end of the sea, where there is no evidence of the existence of the slave-trade, and for visits to Malta to refit, these sloops are each in the waters where slave-trading may exist for an average of six months each year. During this period they carry out continual patrols and examine any dhow which seems likely to be engaged in running slaves, for which purpose they nowadays carry interpreters to facilitate examination of the crews. Their present instructions regarding searches were laid down in 1931, and provide that dhows may be searched, whatever flag they may be flying, anywhere in the Red Sea outside French and Italian territorial waters, though searches inside Saudi territorial waters must be conducted with great discretion and not in the vicinity of important ports. French and Italian authorities must not be offended by undue restraint being placed on dhows flying French or Italian flags, though the dhow must carry authority to fly the flag. Runaway slaves may be given refuge and the nearest British consul or political officer in Arabia immediately consulted. The following table shows the total mileage covered by the two sloops during the last three years, and the number of dhows examined by them:—

	1931.	1932.	1933.
Mileage ... ..	12,161	11,788	14,131
Number of dhows examined ... ..	56	35	35

66. The lack of positive results obtained from this patrol during the last few years is described in paragraph 47 above. From this it must not be argued that the sloops serve no useful purpose towards the suppression of the trade. Already, before the economic crisis had killed the demand for slaves in Saudi Arabia, their presence had reduced slave-running from a large "wholesale" to a small retail business. If increasing prosperity should renew the demand for slaves, the presence of the sloops will serve as a valuable deterrent to a recrudescence of the trade.

### Manumission.

67. Long-established custom, the origin of which is obscure but goes back many years, has given this post the right to manumit and repatriate any slave who runs away and takes refuge in it. The right is for the present crystallised in letters three and four annexed to the Treaty of Jedda (see Appendix VI), so far as concerns slaves who spontaneously apply for sanctuary (see, however, paragraph 55 regarding Royal slaves). The Legation has no right, and scrupulously refrains from any attempt, to seek out and induce slaves thus to take refuge.

68. The results of the manumission practised by the post between 1926, the first year of Ibn Saud's effective control of the country, and 1933 are shown in the analysis to this memorandum which forms Appendix I. During the period, 209 slaves took refuge, of which two fled voluntarily from the premises, eight were locally manumitted, and the remainder were manumitted by the Legation and repatriated either to the Sudan or to Abyssinia.

69. The procedure followed by the Legation is as follows:—

- (1) A slave arrives at the Legation, usually in the very early morning and by stealth, having succeeded in entering the town by the guarded Mecca gate disguised as one of the West African day-labourers who live outside the walls. Occasionally a slave arrives in broad daylight and actively pursued, having run away from a local household. Pursuit generally stops at the Legation gate, however, although Bedouin have been known to carry it into the Legation itself and have had to be turned out. Now and again a slave is sent to the Legation by another foreign mission, for none of these themselves manumit slaves.
- (2) The slave's arrival is reported by the door-keeper to the pro-consul, who interrogates him (or her) and has him thoroughly searched for anything in the way of money or valuables or arms. If of such kind or quantity as a slave would not normally possess, but might be suspected to have stolen, they are taken from him and kept pending enquiry.

- (3) The slave is then examined by the Legation interpreter in the presence of a cavass and his full story is extracted, pieced together and written down. He is then passed for cross-examination, with his history and in charge of the same cavass, to the Indian vice-consul, who has long experience of the country and slavery conditions.
- (4) The slave is then returned with the report of his examination and cross-examination to the pro-consul, who, if he satisfies himself that the case is *bona fide*, gives the slave a room on the ground floor and places him in charge of the door-keeper, allotting the equivalent of 1s. a day from the Legation charity fund for his food, which is purchased for him by the door-keeper. He is not required to do any work of any kind.
- (5) The slave's history sheet is meanwhile passed to the Chancery for filing and submission to the Head of Chancery, whose duty it is to assure himself that the case is a straightforward one requiring manumission. If satisfied, he passes the file to the pro-consul with instructions (a) to inform the local authorities unofficially that the slave has taken refuge, giving them such details as may enable them to trace his master and satisfy themselves that he is not a fugitive from justice; and (b) to draw up a manumission *questionnaire* (specimen attached<sup>(\*)</sup>). This form is submitted to the Minister for approval and eventual signature.
- (6) Any case which presents unusual features is reserved for the Minister's decision before further steps are taken *vis-à-vis* of the local authorities.
- (7) A slave's master seldom makes any attempt to retrieve him. In a few cases, however, more especially in regard to female slaves, the master sends a friend to the Legation, very occasionally coming himself, to try to persuade the slave to return. He has, however, to speak to him (or her) in the presence of the pro-consul. It is sometimes then found possible to arrange for voluntary manumission by the master, which takes the form of a declaration of grant of freedom, made before the Sharia Court of Jedda, sealed by the court and presented by the master to the Legation for safe keeping. The ex-slave thereupon leaves with his (or her) former master.
- (8) In the majority of cases, however, the master makes no move and the slave remains in the Legation. Once in a way a slave walks away and does not return, but if, as in the normal run of cases, he is ready to accept manumission by the Legation and be repatriated to Africa, seven days are allowed to pass before the local authorities are officially approached by the Legation. They are then asked for the necessary permission, without which no one, bond or free, foreigner or native, is allowed to leave the country. This period has by usage become a minimum time, in which the local authorities are expected to be able to satisfy themselves that the slave is not a thief or otherwise criminally charged by his master. It is normally exceeded only by the time necessary to await the arrival of a suitable ship on which to embark the slave.
- (9) Shortly before the date of sailing, and provided the authorities have had seven days' notice of the slave's arrival at the Legation, a written request is addressed to the Governor "to grant the usual facilities in respect of so-and-so, who is being sent by the Legation to . . . ." If higher authority in Mecca has intervened, or if a claim lies against the slave, the "facilities" are refused until the matter is settled with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. In such cases, which have not hitherto been many, the slave is kept until the next sailing. Ordinarily, however, the Governor endorses the request with his signature, an act which has two functions: it authorises the slave's departure, and is thus equivalent to the permissive exit visa which all departing travellers must obtain; and it grants exemption from the usual fees, from which destitutes and slaves who are being repatriated by the Legation, have hitherto by custom been exempted.

(\*) Not printed.



- (10) Thus endorsed, the request passes to the Finance Department, who retain it and issue two written orders, one to the Passport Office, the other to the Quarantine Department, instructing them to allow so-and-so to pass freely and without payment of the outgoing dues. Armed with these orders, a cavass accompanies the slave to the quay, embarks him in the Legation launch, and places him on board ship.
- (11) The Legation's act of manumission is comprised in the signing by the head of the mission of the manumission *questionnaire*, of which a specimen is attached.<sup>(1)</sup> This *questionnaire* is sent in a despatch to the authority who is to receive the ex-slave and travels by the same ship as the slave.

70. The procedure has, on the whole, worked smoothly. The attitude of the local authorities, particularly in the cases of Royal slaves, has been described in paragraphs 54-57.

71. The majority of ex-slaves are of Sudanese or West African origin and are sent to Suakin or Port Sudan, the cost of the journey being met by the charity fund of the British Legation. Once there, they are housed by the Sudan Government in special lodgings maintained for the purpose and are fed at Government expense; no time-limit is fixed for their stay, but they are advised to look round for employment and make up their minds what they would like to do.

72. Slaves of Abyssinian origin are sent to the British vice-consul at Jibuti. Hitherto the latter has kept them until an escort has been sent down from the British Legation at Addis Ababa to collect them and bring them up to Addis Ababa, where they are then handed over to the Slavery Department of the Ethiopian Government. His Majesty's Minister at Addis Ababa is at present endeavouring to obtain the agreement of the Ethiopian Government to such slaves being handed over by the British vice-consul at Jibuti to the Ethiopian consul there, in order to avoid the expense, which, as shown below, falls in a majority of cases on His Majesty's Government, of sending a special escort on each occasion from Addis Ababa to Jibuti. The cost of their journey from Jedda to Addis Ababa is borne by the Ethiopian Government in the case of slaves who can be shown to have been enslaved subsequent to the date of the Emperor's anti-slavery decree, the 31st March, 1924. In other cases, which in fact predominate, the expense of the repatriation as far as Jibuti is borne by the charity fund of the British Legation, Jedda, and from Jibuti to Addis Ababa, including the expense of the escort, by His Majesty's Government. In recent cases it has been found possible to get work for these slaves on the Belgian Coffee Plantation in the Adrucci country.

73. Few slaves of Yemeni origin take refuge; such as have done so have been accepted and disposed of by the Sudan Government in the same way as ex-slaves of Sudanese origin (see paragraph 71).

#### *Local Manumission in Jedda.*

74. A slave who seeks refuge sometimes objects to being sent out of Arabia; this occurs particularly in the case of women born in slavery or enslaved in childhood. These, knowing nothing of the world outside the harem, not unnaturally fear to be sent amongst strangers in an unknown land. In such cases, when the slave's owner lives in or near Jedda, the Legation endeavours, and so far has rarely failed, to induce him to manumit the slave locally. The procedure for this has been described in paragraph 22. Female slaves so manumitted sometimes stay with their owners, sometimes go to live in one of the several institutions maintained by local charity, whence they go out to work in such capacities as washerwomen and domestic servants, the wages from which defray their board in the institution.

#### *The Utility of Manumission.*

75. The relatively small number of slaves who have taken refuge in this Legation and been freed during the past eight years has been stated in paragraph 68, whilst the strength of the Saudi Government's resentment at the

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

continued exercise by the Legation of its rights of manumission has been mentioned in paragraph 53. It may be asked whether, in view of these facts, the right is worth maintaining. To answer the question it is relevant to examine (a) the effect of freedom on a slave, and (b) the effect of the existence of manumission on the state of slaves in this country.

76. Slaves, for the purpose of (a), must be divided into two classes, those born in slavery or enslaved during early childhood, and those enslaved later. The latter class, having known freedom, are usually, though not invariably, anxious for freedom for its own sake. They form a minority of the total slave population; as will be seen from the annexed table of slave manumissions, of 201 slaves manumitted in the past eight years, 185 had been enslaved in childhood. The former, having known no other state than slavery, and having been accustomed since childhood to find food, clothing and lodging provided for them, are frequently totally unfitted to take their place in a free community. Too often the only effect of freeing slaves of this class is to make a thief of the male and a prostitute of the female. This tendency is accentuated, in the case of the Abyssinians, by the frequent ignorance on the part of these slaves of any language but Arabic and of any society other than that of Arabia. To ensure their freedom they must be removed from Arabia, and find themselves in an alien community living in a manner or in a climate very different from anything they have previously experienced. Nevertheless, it has been observed that very few slaves, once manumitted and repatriated, have attempted to return to their state of slavery; and Sudan officials who are qualified to observe the careers of ex-slaves after their manumission have noticed that the majority of them settle down eventually as normal members of society.

77. To examine (b) it is important to notice the reasons which impel slaves to run away from their masters and take refuge in this Legation. These reasons are threefold: (i) a desire for freedom for its own sake, only observable in rare cases wherein the slave has been sold into slavery after growing up in freedom; (ii) to escape from ill-treatment or from uncomfortable conditions of life, sometimes due to worsening economic conditions or from the slave's own temper; (iii) for fear of being sold, particularly noticeable amongst females. Now, a slave who runs away and is manumitted represents a serious loss of capital to the master, who may have paid anything up to £60 for him and who might hope to get as much or more by selling at a future date. The flight of a slave thus touches the Semitic owner in his most sensitive spot, the pocket. Masters have therefore every incentive to keep their slaves reasonably satisfied, lest they escape. Ill treatment of slaves and the separation of slave families by the sale of one of the members have been mentioned in paragraph 11 above as the two chief objections to Arabian slavery and as shown in (ii) and (iii) above from the principal causes for the flight of slaves. There can be no question that masters' fear of losing their slaves, added to their general feeling of holding slaves "on sufferance" (see paragraph 12), has in recent years tended to improve the condition of slaves in those districts of Saudi Arabia within reach of the Jedda Legation.

78. From these points of view it is clear that manumission by the Legation does serve a useful purpose. Its effect must not, however, be exaggerated, for only the fringe of the slave problem is touched by it. As stated above, only masters living within reach of Jedda are affected by the fear of losing their slaves; in the rest of Saudi Arabia the Government's control of circulation is likely to prevent a runaway slave from making his way to Jedda. Of slaves living within reach of Jedda, a few, particularly women, may remain in ignorance of the Legation's right of manumission, or, knowing of it, may also know that, if manumitted, they must be sent out of the country, and may fear to start life in an unknown country amongst strangers.

#### *IV.—Action by other Foreign Powers.*

79. It is hardly too much to say that no foreign Government other than His Majesty's Government shows, so far as local action is concerned, the slightest interest in the suppression of slavery in Saudi Arabia or in the Red Sea slave-trade.



80. The only European Powers having interests in Saudi Arabia, besides Soviet Russia, are France, Italy and the Netherlands. France concluded a treaty with Saudi Arabia in 1931. The negotiations preceding it were held up for some time by the French Government's endeavours to secure the insertion in it of an anti-slavery clause. Ibn Saud strenuously resisted the clause, and the French Government eventually capitulated and withdrew it, the treaty making no mention of slavery. The French consulate at Jedda, of course, does not manumit slaves.

81. Italy concluded a treaty with Ibn Saud in 1932, which likewise contained no mention of slavery. An annexed letter from the Italian signatory, reproduced in Appendix VII, recorded the view that Saudi Arabia must co-operate with Italy in the suppression of the slave-trade, and desired that the Italian representative at Jedda might be assigned the power to manumit slaves spontaneously applying to it. The Saudi signatory's reply, also annexed, stated that (i) Ibn Saud had prohibited the entry of slaves into his dominions and would persevere in this line of action; and (ii) that the Saudi Government were doing their best to abolish slavery in the interior by their own methods, but could not agree to granting the right of manumission to the Italian representative because such action in their territories was their exclusive prerogative. Italy thus likewise capitulated in this matter; their Legation does not manumit slaves.

82. The Netherlands have no treaty with Saudi Arabia, and their Legation in Jedda does not manumit slaves. Nor, needless to say, do the Soviet or any other foreign representatives, all of whom are Moslems.

83. As regards the slave-trade, France and Italy are the only other Powers co-interested with His Majesty's Government in the Red Sea; the former are particularly concerned, in view of the fact that, as stated in paragraph 46 above, it is the coast of French Somaliland which has long been suspect as being the chief entrepôt for the slave-trade from Abyssinia. The French authorities at Jibuti protest that their coast surveillance is such that no slave-dhow could leave their shores without their knowledge. In reality their action seems to be confined to the maintenance of a line of posts, widely separated and staffed entirely by natives, with no effective white supervision, round the shores of the Gulf of Tajura, and to an occasional camel-patrol along the coast, which could easily be dodged by any slave convoy. The two French sloops which from time to time cruise in the Red Sea carry out no dhow examinations, a fact freely admitted by their commanding officers in conversations with senior naval officers in Red Sea sloops. The Italians also maintain a sloop and another vessel at Massawa; these are reported, however, rarely to leave that port, and certainly carry out no dhow examinations. They are understood to make occasional land patrols along the Abyssinian frontier, and, very rarely, along the coast as far as Assab, but, as in the case of the French, these patrols seem too infrequent and too much entrusted to unsupervised natives to form any serious obstacle to the passage of slave convoys. The attitude of both French and Italian authorities towards the slave-trade always gives the impression of being one of complete detachment, coupled with an absolute confidence that the trade does not exist. In this, as is shown in paragraph 48, their attitude may well be justified at the present moment.

84. It may be asked whether the considerable interest in the subject of slavery which has from time to time been displayed by the League of Nations might not stimulate feeling in Arabia towards its abolition. The answer is an almost unqualified negative. The continuance of slavery would undoubtedly constitute one of the most serious, if not the most serious, obstacle in the path of Saudi Arabia's entry into the League if at any time she expressed the desire to do so. Of such an intention there is, however, little trace, if one excepts the tentative enquiries made on the subject on two or three occasions by Fuad Bey Hamza and the Saudi Minister in London. This is easily understandable. The League of Nations, in Saudi Arabia, is no more than a name to all but a sprinkling of the more internationally-minded officials, most of whom, like the two named above, are not natives of the country. The bulk of the population are too ignorant and too remote from the world to realise the uses or the power of the League, and have not the slightest concern with the question whether their country should or should not become a member of it. The average Saudi Arab is thus entirely unaffected by the League's attitude towards slavery, of which, indeed, he is usually not even aware, and even those who know anything of the League's activities regard them as something alien and suspect.

85. The League of Nations Committee of Experts on Slavery, constituted under the Council resolutions of the 29th September, 1931, and the 28th January, 1932, in their report of the 1st September, 1932 (C.618, 1932, VI), devoted some attention to Arabia, and suggested means of pressure on States still maintaining the practice of slavery. The committee were, however, inclined to take a somewhat over-optimistic view of the present position in this country, while their methods of exerting pressure are likely to remain illusory so far as this country is concerned, in view of the widespread indifference to the League indicated in the preceding paragraph.

#### V.—The Future.

86. The preceding sections have given a survey of the position of slavery to-day in Saudi Arabia. The following is a summary of the main conclusions reached:—

- (1) Slavery as practised in Saudi Arabia, however morally reprehensible, and although open to severe abuses, is neither so widespread nor in itself so revolting an institution as to make its abolition a matter of immediate urgency.
- (2) Slavery forms an integral part of the life of the people, the great majority of whom have every interest in its continuance, and its abolition would cause a definite dislocation of the social structure.
- (3) Ibn Saud has taken no effective measures to change the attitude of the people towards slavery or to effect its abolition within his dominions.
- (4) Great Britain alone of foreign Powers takes any active measures to this end; these measures are more deterrents than positive reducing factors.
- (5) On the other hand, economic causes have of late severely limited popular demand for slaves and have reduced the slave-trade, particularly that across the Red Sea, to negligible proportions.

87. It remains to consider three things: firstly, whether slavery may be expected to die out of its own accord within a limited period of time; secondly, whether any further action by His Majesty's Government to hasten its extinction is possible; thirdly, how tenable is the present position of His Majesty's Government *vis-à-vis* Ibn Saud in the matter of anti-slavery action.

#### Extinction by Natural Causes.

88. In paragraph 31 above the causes of the recent decrease in the number of slaves in the country were described. Some of these causes are permanent. Motor-transport has come to stay, and the days of the rich camel-owners, with their large holdings of slaves, have gone for good. The present internal security may pass with Ibn Saud's disappearance from the scene, but improved communications have surely swept away the days of the semi-independent desert "robber-barons," with their slave retinues. Modern ideas must spread eventually, however slowly; a few persons exist in the country who have been drawn into the orbit of Western civilisation by education or travel abroad and are animated more by imported Western ideas of nationalism than by oriental ideas of social relations and religion. These tend to regard slavery as an out-of-date conception; the Amir Feisal, perhaps influenced by the Syrian element in the Government, is said to be one of their number, and might one day be in a position to enforce his ideas. On the other hand, the population as a whole, too remote and proud of race and religion to abandon what their fathers and the Prophet accepted in favour of an alien and Christian conception, remain wedded to their tradition of slavery and slave-owning; in particular, to the idea of measuring success by the number of a man's slaves. The ambitions of most are at present constrained by economic pressure; but indications of increased pilgrimages and of mineral exploitations suggest that in a few years the country might reach a state, measured by its standards, of relative prosperity. An increase in slave-holding, with a consequent fillip to the slave-trade, from the ever-open markets of the Yemen and Abyssinia, seems on the whole the likelier tendency of the future.

89. Ibn Saud alone might be capable, if he so desired, of imposing on the people a general anti-slavery measure. Such action by him is, however, more unlikely now than in 1930. It would antagonise all the most influential of his



subjects, who are at the same time the largest holders of slaves; and his present position, pressed for money, threatened from the Yemen, and widely unpopular amongst townspeople and Bedouin alike, is not such as could induce him to forfeit any support. Moreover nothing suggests any personal anxiety on his part to abolish slavery, beyond the vague statement made by his Minister in London in conversation with the Foreign Office on the 3rd March, 1933 (Foreign Office despatch, No. 124, of the 17th May, 1933), in connexion with the suggested entry of Saudi Arabia into the League of Nations, that the League, if his country were a member of it, "might help him in the matter of anti-slavery measures." His hostility to the workings of the Legation manumission system, so far as it affects himself, have been noted in paragraphs 53 and 55; and nowadays he has less reason to conciliate His Majesty's Government than when he agreed to the insertion of the slavery clauses in the Treaty of Jedda, because he has less to hope for from them. Finally, he can hardly fail to be influenced by the fact, when it comes to his notice, that the treaty between His Majesty's Government and the Yemen, signed at Sana on the 11th February last, so far as is known to this Legation, mentions co-operation against the slave-trade only incidentally, and has no manumission clause, although the Yemen is notoriously a country where slavery is rife.

90. The total suppression of slavery in Saudi Arabia, in fact, could be accomplished in a measurable space of time in one way and only one way, which is by the exertion of strong pressure upon it from the outside.

#### *Further Action by His Majesty's Government.*

91. Possible action by His Majesty's Government towards securing this suppression divides itself into measures directed against (a) the institution of slavery itself, and (b) the slave-trade. In the face of the attitude of the King and the people which has been indicated above, it seems that only active intervention on the part of His Majesty's Government into the conduct of affairs in the country is likely to produce much immediate effect on the institution of slavery. Such intervention is presumably ruled out by the general policy adopted by them towards Ibn Saud. Its discussion is at all events outside the scope of this memorandum.

92. As regards the slave trade across the Red Sea, a number of measures directed towards the total suppression of this trade were discussed in Mr. Bond's memorandum of 1930. Amongst them were the intensification of patrols, particularly by the use of shallow draft, "mystery," motor, or air-craft; the establishment of an intelligence service on the African or Arabian coast of the Red Sea, or in the towns of the Hejaz; and better control of dhow departures from the African coast and exchange of information between British, French, and Italian authorities.

93. Of these proposals, only those relating to air patrols and intelligence service have since been pursued. The former was abandoned after inter-departmental examination, because it was considered that the practical difficulties in the way of aircraft attempting to identify and board dhows were insuperable, and that the use of aircraft might increase the risk of His Majesty's Government's right of search being challenged, a contingency to be avoided since the right rests mainly on usage, and has no satisfactory legal basis. An intelligence service on the African coast, e.g., in French Somaliland, was considered undesirable as being likely to antagonise the French authorities, and the establishment of one on the Arabian coast was finally decided to be useless. The employment of paid agents in Jedda, Mecca, or Medina is subject to many disadvantages. In an exceptionally leaky society their activities could hardly be kept secret, and if known would arouse the bitter resentment of the Saudi Government; while the reports of such agents, who would necessarily be of a low type, would in all probability be more sensational than accurate. A closer watch on those points on the African coast from which dhows are known to sail has always commended itself to naval authorities as the most effective means of control, but depends on the co-operation of French and Italian authorities, who, as shown above, are indifferent to the whole subject, and would certainly not welcome British naval activity directed to this purpose in their territorial waters.

94. The fundamental objection to all these proposals at the present time is that they are likely to involve a greater or lesser measure of extra expense, which,

considering the present negligible dimensions to which the trade has diminished, cannot be regarded as other than unjustifiable.

95. The only sphere in which action by His Majesty's Government seems desirable is the Yemen, which, while not within the scope of this memorandum, does at present provide, as shown in paragraph 40 above, the main reservoir from which the slave supplies of Saudi Arabia are drawn as needed. The Italian Government's "special position" *vis-à-vis* the Imam is hardly such a one as would allow them to urge him to take anti-slavery measures of any sort against his will, and there is no evidence of their having attempted to do so. If they and His Majesty's Government could at any future time combine to urge such measures on him or his successor, the result could not fail in the long run to have effects on the prevalence of slavery in Saudi Arabia. In particular, a complete stoppage of the transit trade in slaves across the land frontier from the Yemen into Saudi Arabia would cut off the only remaining source from which slaves can easily be brought, and would reduce the means by which the Saudi slave-market could be replenished practically to one only, the birth of children of slavery. Whether such action on the part of His Majesty's Government is possible, and whether, if possible, it is practical politics, are entirely separate questions.

#### *Tenability of His Majesty's Government's Position.*

96. An anti-slavery decree by Ibn Saud, similar to that published by the Emperor of Abyssinia in 1924, has been shown to be highly improbable. Far less unlikely of occurrence is an effort on his part to get rid of the manumission annex to the Treaty of Jedda, his hostility to which has been described.

97. Whether he makes such an attempt probably depends largely upon the internal position of the country and particularly on the outcome of the present situation with the Yemen. If made, it will presumably be based on the promise contained in Sir G. Clayton's letter annexed to the Treaty of Jedda and on the argument used in the letter attached to the treaty with Italy (see paragraph 81), and will restate the fundamental difficulty of securing the immediate and total abolition of slavery here while rehearsing the measures already taken by the Saudi Government towards this end.

98. These measures, as indicated in paragraph 51, may be largely illusory, but their existence cannot be categorically denied; and Ibn Saud can claim with truth that the Red Sea slave trade is dead, even though it be economic causes and not any action of his which have killed it. The manumission procedure itself, as will be seen from the system detailed in paragraph 69, depends in at least three of its main items (8, 9 and 10) on the co-operation of the local authorities. Ibn Saud can claim with truth that obstructiveness on their part could easily wreck the working of the system, but he has compelled them to adopt a helpful attitude.

99. The fact remains that Ibn Saud and his Government have taken no administrative measures whatsoever to limit or control the holding of slaves within the country, that they themselves set an example in the opposite sense, and that slavery in Saudi Arabia is a live institution of which all action yet taken, either by Ibn Saud or by His Majesty's Government, has touched only the fringes.

#### Appendix I.

##### *Analysis of Manumissions performed by the British Legation, Jedda, in the Years 1926-33.*

1. Total number of slaves who took refuge	209
Locally manumitted—	
Males	1
Females	7
Manumitted and repatriated—	
Males	151
Females	50
	209



2. Their nationalities—		
Sudanese	...	89
Abyssinians	...	64
British West Africans	...	23
French Equatorial Africans	...	13
Yemenis	...	6
Eritreans	...	1
Adenese	...	2
Unknown	...	11
		209
3. Manner of their enslavement—		
(a) Number captured and enslaved during childhood in their countries of origin by slave traders and subsequently brought to the Hejaz for sale	...	171
(b) Number born in slavery in Saudi Arabia	...	18
(c) Number captured and enslaved while visiting the country...	...	20
		209
N.B.—Only fifteen of those in category (a) had been in a state of slavery less than ten years, the shortest recorded time being eight years.		
4. Ages—		
Under 20	...	58
Between 20 and 50	...	115
Over 50	...	25
No record kept	...	11
		209
5. Trade or craft of slaves—		
Domestic (males)	...	62
Domestic (females) (including cooks)	...	44
Agricultural labourers (male and female)	...	33
Water carriers (male and female)	...	23
Camel drivers	...	13
Shepherds	...	7
Seamen	...	7
Shop boys	...	5
Porters	...	3
Fishermen and pearl divers	...	4
Stone cutters	...	2
Washerwomen	...	2
Soldiers	...	2
Miller	...	1
Chauffeur	...	1
		209

Appendices II and III not printed.

#### Appendix IV.

##### *Some Extracts from Islamic Law bearing on Slavery.*

NOTE.—The following extracts are according to the Hanafi School of Jurisprudence, and have all been extracted from the *Hidaya*, a standard law-book by a local jurist, except for section 1, which has been taken from another standard work, the *Dar-ul-Mukhtar*. They form only the portion most relevant for the purposes of this memorandum of a considerable body of law dealing with every sort of contingency connected with the various sorts of slaves and their relations with their owners.

The terms "mudabbir," "mukatib," "umm walad" and "tausiya" have been explained in paragraph 21 of the memorandum. The word "madun" is explained where it appears.

#### 1. *Marriage of Slaves.*

(i) Slaves, male and female, "mukatibs" "mudabbirs" and "umm walads" (see paragraph 21) can contract a marriage only with the permission of the master; failing such permission, they will be held responsible for dowry and alimony.

(ii) If a man gives his daughter in marriage to a "mukatib" and then dies, the marriage shall not be cancelled, even if she inherits her husband, providing that he fulfils the terms of his "katib." If he fails to do so he shall be re-enslaved and the marriage cancelled.

(iii) A man who has intercourse with his son's female slave shall be responsible for her value if she becomes pregnant by him and he admits her to be his "umm walad."

(iv) If the father then marries her and she gives birth, she shall not be considered as "umm walad," but a legal wife, and the father shall pay a dowry on her account instead of her price; her child will be free.

(v) If a man has intercourse with a female slave belonging to his wife, father or grandfather, and she bears a child of which he admits paternity, she shall only be admitted to be "umm walad" with her owner's permission.

(vi) A man has the right to force his male and female "mukatib" slaves to marry before they fulfil their "katib."

#### 2. *The Tadbir System* (see paragraph 21 (b)).

(i) A slave once admitted to be a "mudabbir," this cannot be cancelled. A "mudabbir" cannot be sold, given or mortgaged, but remains a slave until he is freed or purchases his freedom by a "mukatib" system.

(ii) The son of a female "mudabbira" shall be an unconditional "mudabbir."

(iii) If a "mudabbira" gives birth to a child of which her master admits paternity, she becomes "umm walad," and her "tadbir," being needless, is cancelled.

(iv) If a fugitive slave is a "mudabbir" or an "umm walad," and the master dies before his or her recapture, the heirs shall not be liable to execute the manumission.

#### 3. *The Tausiya System* (see paragraph 21 (c)).

(i) The gift, sale or manumission of his slave by a dying man is lawful. Such disposal shall not, however, exceed one-third the amount of his whole estate.

(ii) If a man executes a "tausiya" in respect of a slave, who after his death commits wilful murder, the "tausiya" shall be deemed to be cancelled.

(iii) A "tausiya" is automatically cancelled by the manumission of the slave. If the slave commits a crime after the death of the master, he shall be liable for punishment, unless the master's heirs pay compensation, but the "tausiya" shall not be cancelled.

#### 4. *The Kitaba System* (see paragraph 21 (d)).

(i) A "mukatib" cannot be sold except by mutual consent.

(ii) A "mukatib" has the right to buy, sell and leave his master, but has no right to marry without permission, to guarantee, or to make gifts or loans. He may own slaves, and allow his female slaves to marry, or make a "mukatab" contract with his slaves, but may not free or give them in marriage.

(iii) If a master marries his female slave to his "mukatib," and subsequently makes a contract of "mukataba" with her, and she then gives birth to a child, the child shall be included in the mother's "mukataba," and anything he may earn shall belong to her.

#### 5. *The Madun System.*

(i) A slave to whom a general power of "medun" is granted, may buy, sell, appoint attorneys, hire, hire himself, mortgage, and give guarantee for a debt or a deposit.



(ii) A slave to whom the power of "madun" is granted may act (buy, sell, &c.) according to his ability and until the "madun" is cancelled. If it is granted to him for a day, it shall be deemed to continue in perpetuity unless formally cancelled.

(iii) A "madun" may not marry or give his slave in marriage, nor effect a "mukataba" contract, nor manumit a slave for money, nor give a slave as a gift.

(iv) A "madun" shall be held responsible for any debt which he may incur in the way of trade, sale, purchase, &c. He may be sold himself on account of such debt if his master declines payment on his behalf.

(v) A "madun" may have his power cancelled if his master dies, or if he becomes a lunatic, or if he goes to war and becomes a renegade.

#### 6. Miscellaneous.

(i) An act of partnership cannot be effected between a free man and a slave, or between two slaves.

(ii) No tribute shall be imposed on slaves or "mukatibs."

(iii) Neither slaves nor "mukatibs" are bound to pay the "zakat" (religious tithe).

(iv) To appoint a slave as Imam (prayer leader) is a displeasing act.

(v) The gift of a slave, excluding the child in her womb, shall be considered a valid gift.

(vi) Neither a slave nor a "mukatib" may dispose of any property which may belong to his child. He may not buy or sell his child, nor arrange his child's marriage.

(vii) Slaves, like minors and the blind, are not compelled to go on the jihad (religious war), but if the enemy assails, they may go out against them without the necessity of first obtaining their master's permission.

(viii) If a man buys a female slave worth, say, 1,000 dirhams, together with, say, a necklace worth 1,000 dirhams, and pays 1,000 dirhams and delays payment of the balance, the sum paid shall be held to be in respect of the necklace.

(ix) The amount of "dia" (blood-money) to be paid for the death of a slave equals his market value. If, however, this value equals the value of a free man, the slave's "dia" shall be 10 per cent. less than this figure.

(x) If a man steals a slave who dies in his possession, the thief shall be liable for the slave's value, unless this value equals the "dia" of a free man, in which case he shall be liable for 10 per cent. less than this.

(N.B.—It will be observed from the preceding extracts that a difference of 10 per cent. is always held to exist between the value of two equal persons, one of whom is free and the other a slave.)

(xi) A runaway slave may legally be captured by any man. If, however, another man then claims him and produces evidence in support of his claim, or if the slave declares himself to be the slave of the other man, even though the latter can produce no evidence in support of the claim, then the slave shall be handed over to the claimant on his producing a guarantee. If a runaway slave is recaptured, but the master fails to come forward within a certain time, the judge may order the slave to be sold elsewhere.

(xii) A man who recaptures a runaway slave and returns him to his master is entitled to a reward of 40 dirhams. Such reward shall not, however, be paid to a Sultan, the police, &c.

Appendix V not printed.

#### Appendix VI.

Article 7 of, and Letters (3) and (4) annexed to, Treaty of Jedda.

##### 1. Article 7.

His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and of Nejd and its Dependencies undertakes to co-operate by all means at his disposal with His Britannic Majesty in the suppression of the slave trade.

##### 2. Letter (3).

Sir G. Clayton to His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and Nejd and its Dependencies.

Your Majesty,

In continuation of our conversations relating to the question of the slave trade, I have the honour to inform your Majesty that His Britannic Majesty's Government feel it their duty to abstain at present from renouncing the right of manumitting slaves, which has long been practised by His Majesty's consular officers, and which enables them to liberate any slave who presents himself of his own free choice with a request for liberation and repatriation to his country of origin.

I wish to assure your Majesty that His Britannic Majesty's Government's insistence on this right is not intended to mean any interference in the affairs of your Government or any infringement of your Majesty's sovereignty, but that it is due to His Britannic Majesty's Government's resolve to carry out a duty which they owe to humanity. I would add that His Britannic Majesty's Government will be prepared to consider the abolition of the right of manumission as soon as it becomes clear to both parties that the co-operation stipulated in article 8 of the Treaty of Jedda has resulted in the enforcement of such practical measures as to render the exercise of the right of manumission no longer necessary.

I trust that your Majesty will appreciate the attitude of His Britannic Majesty's Government in this matter, and that you will see fit to acquiesce in the procedure which I have described above.

Respects,

GILBERT CLAYTON,  
His Britannic Majesty's  
Commissioner and Plenipotentiary.

Jedda, May 19, 1927 (Zul Qa'da 18, 1345).

##### 3. Letter (4).

Abdul-Aziz-bin-Abdul-Rahman-al-Faisal-al-Saud to His Britannic Majesty's Commissioner and Plenipotentiary.

(Translation.)

In reply to your Excellency's letter, dated the 18th Zul Qa'da (19th May, 1927), relating to the manumission of slaves, I am confident that the British agent at Jedda will always act in accordance with the spirit in which our agreement was arrived at, and that he will not permit any confusion as this might have undesirable effects on the administrative and economic aspects of this question.

Respects,

ABDUL-AZIZ-BIN-ABDUL-RAHMAN-AL-SAUD.

Zul Qa'da 19, 1345 (May 21, 1927).

#### APPENDIX VII.

Annexed Letters to Italian Treaty.

(A) *Commendatore Solazzo to the Amir Feisal.*

(Translation.)

Your Royal Highness,

Jedda, February 10, 1932.

IN the course of the negotiations which have happily concluded in the Treaty of Friendship between His Majesty the King of Italy and His Majesty the King of the Hejaz, Nejd and Dependencies, I had the honour to explain the point of view of the Government of His Majesty the King of Italy in regard to the traffic in and the manumission of slaves, which is as follows:—

1. The Government of His Majesty the King of Italy, in virtue of the high principles which inspire their actions in the struggle against slavery, consider it necessary that the Government of His Majesty the King of the Hejaz, Nejd and Dependencies should assume the obligation of co-operating with them, employing



all the means at their disposal, in suppressing the slave trade. Such co-operation is destined to strengthen that spirit of mutual assistance and collaboration between the two Governments which animates and guides the joint and determined action of all civilised nations against slavery.

2. Similarly, the Government of His Majesty the King of Italy desire that their representatives at Jedda may be assigned the power to manumit and repatriate any slave who spontaneously applies to them. I desire to assure your Royal Highness that the exercise of such a power by our representatives should not be at all considered as an interference in the affairs of your country, but as a means whereby the co-operation of the two Governments in regard to the problem of slavery can be more actively and closely carried out.

I trust that His Majesty the King of the Hejaz, Nejd and Dependencies will appreciate this attitude on the part of the Government of His Majesty the King of Italy and the reasons which induce them to maintain their point of view in this matter.

I have, &c.  
GUIDO SOLAZZO.

(B) *The Amir Feisal to Commendatore Solazzo.*

(Translation.)

Sir,

Jedda, February 10, 1932.

I HAVE considered your note of this day's date regarding slavery. The Government of His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and of Nejd and Dependencies, while appreciating the humane sentiments which have induced the Government of His Majesty the King of Italy to make the request contained in the note under reference, desire to make the following explanatory statement on this subject:—

1. The suppression of the illicit trade in slaves constitutes one of the most important questions to which our Government have directed their attention. His Majesty my Sovereign, from the day on which he ascended the Throne of the Hejaz, has displayed particular interest to the end that the entry of slaves into his territory should be prevented; it may, in fact, be said that for several years no person has been able to import slaves into this country. The Government will spontaneously persevere in this line of action.

2. As regards the paragraph numbered (2) in your note, His Majesty's Government are using on their own initiative their endeavours within the country to reach the end which is enjoined by our Islamic law with its principles of supreme justice and its pure sentiment of humanity. The reason for which our Government abstain from granting the power requested in the paragraph numbered (2) of your note is that such action in our territories is a sole and exclusive right of our Government.

I have, &c.  
FEISAL.

[E 3651/279/91]

No. 87.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received June 4.)*

(No. 144.)

HIS Majesty's Minister at Jedda presents his compliments to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit to him copy of a note from the Acting Saudi Minister for Foreign Affairs dated the 13th May respecting the Qatar boundaries.

Jedda, May 14, 1934.

Enclosure in No. 87.

*Acting Saudi Minister for Foreign Affairs to Sir A. Ryan.*

(Translation.)

Your Excellency,  
(After Compliments.)

Mecca, Muharram 29, 1353 (May 13, 1934).

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Excellency's note No. 65 of the 28th April, 1934 (14th Muharram, 1353), which you addressed to me in accordance with the instructions of your Government, with its enclosures, the two Anglo-Turkish conventions concluded on the 29th July, 1913, and the 9th March, 1914, regarding the specification of certain boundaries of areas and territories in eastern Arabia.

Your Excellency is not aware of the great difference between the position at the time of the signature of the two conventions mentioned above and the position which came after and of the great developments which have taken place in Arabia itself and which led to the alteration of the frontier line laid down in the convention of the 29th July, 1913, between the dominions of His Majesty the King and Koweit. There is no doubt that the same developments (besides the considerations of which I had an opportunity of mentioning some to your Excellency during our friendly conversation of Wednesday last, the 3rd May) put the Government of His Majesty the King in a position of being compelled to state their inability to consider the frontier line specified in the two above conventions as actually constituting the correct line of their frontier with the neighbouring territories in the east and south of Arabia. With this reservation, therefore, they declare their readiness to (enter into) discussion at any time desired with a view to defining the frontiers in a manner which shall be in consonance with the actual conditions and which shall secure for this country and for all the neighbouring Arab territories the essential interests of each in a practical way.

With highest respects,

FUAD HEMZA.

*Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs.*

[E 3727/79/25]

No. 88.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received June 5.)*

(No. 134.)

(Telegraphic.)

Jedda, June 5, 1934.

SENIOR naval officer, Red Sea. Situation report to Admiralty 3rd June and 4th June.

Fuad informed me this morning that Abdul Wahhab was to surrender voluntarily at Abuarish. Saudi Government have no confirmation of his having done so, but they seem to count on it and to regard Imam's action in surrendering others as proof that he will now keep his word all along the line. Yemenis have begun to evacuate mountain area and satisfactory arrangement has been made regarding modalities of release of hostages. Saudi evacuation of Hodeida will follow. Abdulla Wazir will meet Feisal at Hodeida and make all local arrangements. Saudi troops will be embarked in two ships belonging to shipping company recently formed here. I explained to Fuad reasons which had made it necessary during the week before last to postpone proposed withdrawal of all warships. I suggested that time of greatest anxiety for us would be when new change over from Saudi to Yemenis was taking place. He said, in such circumstances, the first concern of Saudi authorities would naturally be for safety of their own troops, but assured me that they would feel in honour bound to do everything possible on their part to prevent trouble for others.

(Repeated to senior naval officer, Red Sea sloops, for self and Resident at Aden.)



*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received June 7.)*

(No. 145.)

Sir,

Jedda, May 14, 1934.

WITH reference to paragraph 9 of my despatch No. 133 of the 28th April, I have the honour to enclose herewith one copy of the Saudi Green Book, which was published in its complete form on the 29th April. It runs, as you will see, to over 200 pages of close print, and I cannot hope to forward a translation. I enclose a summary of the contents of the book. The plan of the principal chapters is to provide a certain amount of explanation and comment in addition to the numbered documents which form the major portion. Numerous as these documents are they certainly do not contain anything like all the correspondence which has passed since 1927. I will give you one instance which is of present importance. On the 8th May Fuad first spoke to me of the possibility of peace on the basis of compliance by the Imam with Ibn Saud's demands as formulated at the outset of the present hostilities, subject to certain "guarantees," which seemed to be of a formidable character, as they were to include a rectification of frontiers and an indemnity. I suggested, in a general way, to Fuad Bey that, as the King had persistently repeated his demands in their original form, it might be somewhat difficult to recede from the position that compliance with them was the only condition of peace. Fuad Bey gently reminded me that a treaty of friendship had also to be concluded and said that any question of "guarantees" would fall to be dealt with in this. Then he added that a telegram, not published in the Green Book, had been addressed to the Imam warning him of the risks he might run, if actual hostilities became necessary.

2. The Green Book nevertheless contains texts of great interest. Perhaps the most interesting of all is the text of the first treaty between Ibn Saud and the Idrisi, the exact nature of which has long been a subject of speculation. I enclose a rough translation of this agreement, but as I cannot have it checked at present, I would ask that it should not be used for purposes of publication until a more accurate translation can be made. You will observe that it bears the date the 16th Dhu'l Hijja, 1338 (the 31st August, 1920), whereas it is referred to in the second Saudi-Idrisi Treaty of the 21st October, 1926, as an agreement of the 10th Safar, 1339 (the 24th October, 1920). I have ascertained from Fuad Bey that the date of signature is correctly stated in the Green Book and that the latter date is that of a letter from Ibn Saud approving of it. This gave the agreement final validity, the Idrisi himself having signed the original.

3. The title "Imam" has become so closely associated in European language with the Imam Yahya that it may not be out of place to remind you that it is borne equally by Ibn Saud as Imam of the Wahhabis and by the Idrisi as the religious head of his own adherents. It has often, in the past, been applied to them *tout court*, with results that are nowadays somewhat confusing.

4. It will be seen from the enclosed translation that the first Saudi-Idrisi Treaty did not in any precise sense establish frontiers. What it did was to take account of the ancestral claims of Ibn Saud, founded on the early expansion of Wahhabi and the more recent expansion of the Idrisi, whose pretensions, if not his actual occupation, extended to areas far greater than his dominion in the Tihama of Asir. The effect of the agreement was to partition the total area which both might claim, but much more with reference to tribes and their ranges than to geographical features. I need not pursue the analysis further at present. I would point out, however, that, unless a treaty in modern form between Ibn Saud and the Imam Yahya relegates all past arrangements to limbo, the agreement of 1920 may still have importance in connexion with the complicated question of Ibn Saud's titles.

5. Next in interest is the account given of the negotiations between Ibn Saud and the Imam Yahya in 1927-28 and the settlement of the Arwa question in 1931. The story of the two missions which Ibn Saud sent to Sana in 1927 and the Yemeni missions which came to Mecca in 1928 becomes much clearer than it has hitherto been. The telegrams between the Imam and Ibn Saud which produced the latter's award giving Arwa to the Imam are still of interest. The most important points are perhaps the following:—

(a) When the first Saudi mission went to Sana they were confronted with a Yemeni claim to the whole of Asir, as having always been Yemeni, despite

Idrisi occupation. The Saudi mission counterclaimed the whole country as far as Mokha and Zebid and inland to Bajil, as having been Idrisi, and denied all Yemeni claims in Asir. It is not astonishing that no agreement was reached.

(b) Chapter III contains *procès-verbaux* of meetings held during the visit of the second Saudi mission to Sana. If trustworthy, they bear out the recent Saudi contention that an oral agreement of sorts was reached in the course of two meetings, as stated in Mr. Zada's letter to Mr. Rendel of the 28th July, 1933. It is less important to try to ascertain the effect of that agreement, none of the versions of which quite agree in terms, than to record the fact that it was clearly a *status quo* arrangement only. The best of several proofs of this is that, when sending his own mission immediately afterwards to Mecca, the Imam wrote a letter to Ibn Saud in which he described his object as being to convince the King of his claim to "what is in the hands of the Idrisi . . . together with all that is counted as of Khaulan-bin-Amr and Hamdan-bin-Zeyd." This, I think, can be taken as a restatement of his demands of the previous year, though it is difficult to estimate the territorial scope of demands in regard to the interior, defined with reference to the names of tribal ancestors.

(c) The Imam's mission to Mecca accomplished absolutely nothing and though the *status quo* went on it might well be argued that whatever validity it had was impaired or destroyed by the failure of the negotiations in the course of which it was more or less defined. The Imam does not, however, seem to have taken this line. He bided his time until he advanced to Arwa.

(d) The Arwa incident led to a fresh meeting of delegations. As you are aware, they came to a deadlock over territorial questions and the Imam left the matter to the arbitration of Ibn Saud. The King's telegram of the 22nd Rajab, 1350 (the 3rd December, 1931), giving his award, is precise only in the phrase: "I say that I abandon Jebel Arwa to your Honour." It is, however, clear from the correspondence that other specific areas had been discussed, including that of the Beni Malik and Jebel Fifa, and the Imam, in his reply of the 27th Rajab, 1350 (the 8th December, 1931), said that he had instructed his delegates not to pursue the question of that particular area. This goes far to justify Ibn Saud's resentment at the Imam's recent interference in the area in question, but the correspondence is in other respects ambiguous. The editor of the Green Book seems hardly justified in stating that the Imam's telegram constitutes a complete recognition of the frontier by the Imam, subject only to a request of consideration of a proposal of his in regard to two named tribes. From a European point of view the upshot of the Arwa dispute can only be regarded as obscure, except as regards Arwa itself and perhaps the Beni Malik-Fifa area.

(e) Immediately after the settlement of the Arwa question, the delegates signed a Treaty of Friendship, &c., dated the 15th December, 1931. It was noted at the time that this treaty made no reference to frontiers. It has always been doubtful whether the Imam regarded it as a treaty at all, although the Saudi Government stated later that it had been ratified by an exchange of telegrams. It now appears from the texts of these as published in the Green Book that Ibn Saud's telegram expressed a straightforward approval of what his delegates had agreed to, but the Imam's telegram could be read either as an approval or as a postponement pending further discussion. On the face of it, it looks like an approval, but he asked the King to send his delegates again to discuss outstanding minor points.

6. Chapters VI to XIII relate to the most recent phase beginning about the end of August 1932, when, after delay due to various causes, including the Ibn Rifada revolt, the King again turned his attention seriously to his relations with the Imam. I have not had the whole of these chapters translated, as you are familiar with the main course of events and the result of all the negotiations, including the King's suggestion for a sort of alliance, has been negative so far as any agreements of permanent effect are concerned.

7. I have not yet had time to study Chapter XIV, which deals with the Yam and with Najran. The divergence of views regarding these has been so complete and both parties are, to my mind, on such weak ground that I do not expect the documents to prove of much use either way, but, if I find them to be of sufficient interest, I will submit a further report on them at leisure.

8. The Imam Yahya is a master of obscure language. Ibn Saud is more capable of precision, but can be equally obscure on occasion. They both, as you



know, overlay most of what they say with blankets of pious verbiage. I trust, therefore, that you will make allowance for the imperfection of this despatch, which I have prepared at a time of great pressure from rough translations of highly peculiar texts. I have endeavoured to isolate the points which seem to have most bearing on the present dispute, in case the recent happy turn of events should result in a rational general settlement free from the ambiguities of the past.

9. In this connexion I would revert to my despatch No. 1 of the 2nd January relative to the possibility of a Saudi claim to Hudeyda and connected matters. In that despatch I expressed the view that a study of historical events since 1872 might be a useful contribution to an examination of the claims and counter-claims of the two rulers. I have found that to be really useful such a study should go much further back, and, while I have collected a good deal of material, I have found it quite impossible to complete and collate it. The most I can hope to do is to produce at some future time a paper of some historical interest, even though a settlement between Ibn Saud and the Imam should deprive it of practical utility.

10. In the meanwhile the facts which I have collected are of use in shaping my own views. If I were revising my despatch No. 1 of 2nd January, I should amend it in various particulars. I should not, however, alter my view that Ibn Saud has a good case for claiming both parts of Asir; that he would have a very poor case for claiming as against the Imam, on historical or legal grounds, the littoral beyond a point somewhere not far south of the Wadi Tashar; and that neither he nor the Imam has any strong claim to Najran, as against the local tribes. As regards Hudeyda, I find myself supported by no less an authority than Ibn Saud himself, who, in the conversation reported in Sir G. Clayton's despatch of the 16th July, 1928, to the Colonial Office, said: "That he would leave the Imam in possession of Hudeyda, to which he recognised the Imam's clear right."

11. I am sending copies of this despatch and the English enclosures to His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome and the Chief Commissioner at Aden.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

Enclosure 1 in No. 89.

*Contents of the Saudi Green Book on the Saudi-Yemen Conflict. Published on April 29, 1934.*

*Introduction.*—Added just before publication, explaining the final reasons for publishing the book.

Chapter I. *Short general introduction.*

Chapter II. *First Saudi Mission to Sana.*—Arrived 3 Dhul Hijja, 1345. Left about 30th July, 1927. Documents 1 and 2.

Chapter III. *Second Saudi Mission to Sana.*—Sittings lasted from 20 Jumada ath-Thani, 1346, to 21 Rajab, 1346, when the Imam received the mission and announced his intention of sending back with them a Yemeni mission to Ibn Saud. Documents 3 to 6 include extracts from *procès-verbaux* and the Imam's letter to the King of 2 Shaban, 1346.

Chapter IV. *Visit of Yemeni Mission to Mecca.*—Arrived during Ramadhan 1346 (began on the 22nd February, 1928), and stayed apparently until some time in June 1928. Documents 7 to 10.

Chapter V. *The Arwa Incidents.*—Documents 11 to 20 relate to the period from September 1931 up to the end of the negotiations following the incident in December 1931, the "ratification" of the treaty then concluded and the proposed despatch of a further Saudi mission.

Chapter VI. *Yemeni Violations of the Treaty.*—Documents 20 to 22.

Chapter VII. *Endeavours to bring about the Conclusion of a Defensive Treaty.*—Documents 23 and 24, being Ibn Saud's letter of 8 Jumada ath-Thani, 1351, and the Imam's reply of 7 Ramadhan, 1351, sent by the hand of Ibn Dhawi, a secretary of the King's.

Chapter VIII. *Latest Saudi Mission to Sana.*—Documents 25 to 44 cover the despatch and proceedings of the mission sent in 1933.

Chapter IX. *Negotiations following on the Return of the Mission from Sana.*—Documents 45 to 50.

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Chapter XII. *Negotiations between the Saudi and Yemeni Delegates at Abha.*—Documents 122 to 127 describe the negotiations from 2 Dhul Qada, 1352, to 18 Dhul Qada, 1352.

Chapter XIII. *Telegrams exchanged during and after the Abha Negotiations.*—Documents 128 to 151 are all direct telegrams which passed between the Imam and the King from 19 Dhul Qada, 1352, to 24 Dhul Hijja, 1352.

Chapter XIV. *Question of the Territories of Yam and Najran.*—Documents 152 to 166.

*Geographical and Historical Appendix.*—This is a most disappointing effort at a summary in five pages of various geographical and historical considerations going back to the time of the Prophet.

Enclosure 2 in No. 89.

*Treaty between His Majesty the King and the Idrisi, signed August 31, 1920.*

(Translation.)

IN the name of God the Most Merciful, the Compassionate. Prayers and peace may be upon the Prophet of God.

May it be known to him who sees and reads this that when the Imam Abdul Aziz-bin-Abdurrahman-al-Feysal, may God protect him, ordered us to go to the Imam Muhammad-bin-Ali-bin-Idris to conclude an agreement of particular Islamic brotherhood and to bring about union in the religion of God and His Prophet, and to invite people to collaborate in good deeds and piety, to cause good manners to be carried out and evils prohibited, to strive in the Cause of God and to endeavour to unite the hands against the enemies of the religion. When we approached the above-mentioned Imam he was glad and pleased to hear it. He liked it and he was keen about collaboration in working for the welfare. It was, therefore, decided by us and him to have an agreement of brotherhood concluded between the two above-mentioned Imams on the above-mentioned lines. Whereas there were in the kingdom (? territory) of the Imam Muhammad-bin-Ali tribes and cities in Yemen of those which were in the past belonging to Al Saud, the Imam Abdul Aziz has left them for him because of his desire for the welfare and collaboration in the same and his good behaviour. It is, therefore, necessary, to specify the tribes and to distinguish them in order that each one of them may undertake the duties commanded by God in respect of the subjects under him. So the tribes of all Yam, Wadaa and those which belong to them of Beni Jamaa, Sahar, Sharif, Qabtan, Rufeida and Ubeyda, including Beni Bishr, Beni Talq, Shahrani, Beni Shehr, Ghamid, Asir Ghamid, and all "Qadha" (province) of Mahayel, including Beni Thua, people of Bareq and Targash, people of Ar Rish, and others who belong to them, and all the tribes of Hali mentioned are all under the Imam Abdul Aziz. Those belonging to the Imam Muhammad-bin-Ali-al-Idrisi are Tihama, except what is mentioned above, and other belongings in his possession. Rijal-al-Ma of Asir is his own property. Neither party should interfere in affairs of the subjects of the other party. The tribes of the Surat, Tihama, Yam and others mentioned above as belonging to Abdul Aziz-bin-Abdurrahman cover the villages and the Bedouins in mountains and plain lands. They have to advise and collaborate with each other, and to exert their endeavours in performing their duties commanded by God as to what is necessary for the religion of Islam and in respect of their subjects. This has been issued, written and declared by us, the representatives of the Imam, as we are acting on his behalf, and by the Imam Muhammad-bin-Ali-bin-Idris, in his presence and under his signature. This agreement and covenant has been given by us and him. He who goes back on his word will be violating his own promise. May God grant us success. Prayers and peace of God may be upon Muhammad, his relatives and friends.

16th Dhul Hijja, 1338 (31st August, 1920).

(Seal.)

MUHAMMAD-BIN-ALI-BIN-IDRIS.

Representatives of the Imam:

ABDULLAH-BIN-MUHAMMAD-AR-RASHID.

NASIR-BIN-HAMAD-AL-JARALLAH.

FEYSAL-BIN-ABDUL AZIZ-AL-MUBARAK.



## INDEX.

## Note on Titles, &amp;c.

1. *Sherif*.—Said to apply strictly in Arabia to persons recognised as being in the direct male descent from Hasan, the son of the Caliph Ali. There is, however, much confusion as to the exact meaning of this and the following term.

2. *Seyyid*.—Said to apply in Arabia, though much abused in some other countries, only to persons recognised as being in the male descent from Huseyn, the son of 'Ali.

3. *Amir*.—Given as a title to all princes of the blood and describes the office of practically all provincial governors.

4. *Sheykh*.—Applied very widely, but not indiscriminately, not only to tribal personages, but to townsmen of consequence, especially, perhaps, though not exclusively, to those in official positions, e.g., Sheykh Yusuf Yasin.

5. *Bey*.—Still used, sometimes in preference to Sheykh, by persons who would have been so called by right or courtesy in the Turkish system and who may dislike the association of "Sheykh" with age or desert life, e.g., Fuad Bey Hamza.

6. *Hajji*.—Convenient, in a country where every Hejazi adult has made the pilgrimage, for certain persons not otherwise easy to give a title to, e.g., Hajji Yusuf Zeinal.

7. *Effendi*.—Still applied to persons hardly entitled to be called Sheykh or anything equally honorific, e.g., Muhammad Effendi 'Ali Ridha.

8. *Ibn, &c.*—Means, like its variant, Bin, "son of," or by extension, "descendant of." Replaced sometimes by the article "al," which it is not always easy to distinguish from "âl," meaning "of the house of." All four forms are illustrated by the name of the King, "Abdul-'Aziz ibn (son of) 'Abdurrahman al (son of) Faysal al (of the house of) Sa'ud," and the abbreviated names ibn Sa'ud or bin Sa'ud. The use of the patronymic "Ibn So-and-So" is so common as often to make a man's personal name difficult to trace.

9. *Abû*.—Means "father." Used in combination with the name of an actual son or the name of an object to form a familiar name or nickname, which sometimes becomes an accredited surname. Thus, Captain Glubb is known in the desert as "Abû Hunaik," or the father of the Little Jaw. Similar names are sometimes formed from other terms of relationship.

10. *Composition of Names*.—The most normal formation is to build from a person's own name by adding that of his father and sometimes names of remoter ancestors and/or a family name. It is not uncommon to omit at least the first Ibn and place the father's name immediately after that of the person described, e.g., 'Abdullah Ibrahim al-Fadhl. It cannot be assumed, however, that the second of two unseparated names is that of the father, especially if the first be Muhammad, which is often little more than a prefix.

11. The following index gives, except in two cases, the first name of all living Arabs mentioned otherwise than incidentally in the report, but where Muhammad appears to be no more than a prefix it is reduced to M. and ignored for purposes of alphabetical order. Secondary entries have been made in many, but not in all, cases, where a patronymic or a family name seems likely to help to trace particular individuals:—

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### 1. Royal Family.

(1) 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn 'Abdur-Rahman al-Faysal al Sa'ud.—King of Sa'udi Arabia, commonly known as Ibn Sa'ud.

Born probably in 1880. Accompanied father on flight from Riyadh upon its occupation by Ibn Rashid in 1891. Grew up under tutelage of Sheykh Mubarak of Kuwait, who gave asylum to family. Seized opportunity in course of local warfare in Eastern Arabia to deliver surprise attack on Riyadh in January 1902 with very small force and retook it. Became recognised head of the family although his father 'Abdurrahman survived until 1928. Extended his authority gradually over whole of Nejd and Qasim and in 1914 took the coastal province of Hasa from the Turks, who then made an agreement with him. Entered into treaty relations with His Majesty's Government through the Government of India in 1915. Took Hail in 1921 and finally destroyed power of Beni

Rashid. Next fought King Huseyn, an old enemy. Took Mecca in 1924 and completed conquest of Hejaz by compelling abdication at end of 1925 of Huseyn's son and successor 'Ali. Acquired suzerainty over 'Asir in 1926. Converted position into one of practical sovereignty in 1930 and recently reduced 'Asir to status of ordinary province, following on repression of a rebellion there. Has thus become ruler of territory, seaboard of which extend from just south of 'Aqaba to just north of Medi in Yemen and from Kuwait neutral zone to north of Qatar Peninsula.

Ibn Sa'ud has measured his titles by his acquisitions. He became in 1902 Amir of Nejd and Imam of the Wahhabis; in 1921 Sultan of Nejd and its Dependencies; in January 1926 King of the Hejaz; in 1927 King of the Hejaz and of Nejd and its Dependencies; and finally in September 1932 King of the Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia, defined as a single and united State, comprising his existing dominions, though without express mention of 'Asir.

The hero of this spectacular aggrandisement is a man of fine presence, some 6 foot 3 inches in height and handsome except for a blotch across the left eye due to neglected leucoma. He combines a strong character with courage, much native shrewdness and a charm which, though now a little stereotyped, is still attractive. He is feared rather than loved by his subjects on all of whom except those of the Shi'a persuasion he imposes at least the forms of Wahhabism. His own Wahhabism is sincere, but tempered by a readiness to compromise when his temporal position requires innovations contrary to the prejudice of extremists or sometimes even to the original principles of his sect. On his own ground he is an efficient ruler and a hard one, a Napoleon of the desert, but too much of the desert to cope quite successfully with the problems with which his conquest of the Hejaz and his attainment of an international position have confronted him. In diplomacy he is normally fairly honest, but difficult. He is as well disposed towards foreigners as is compatible with his fundamental belief that Islam is all in all. His relations with Great Britain have been mainly friendly, but he is a friend who expects much for love. He has tried a strong constitution very high by living hard and by innumerable marriages. It was reckoned some years ago that he had already had over 200 wives, though never more than the permitted four at a time. He is thought to find the natural decline in his powers in this direction disconcerting, but seems otherwise a hale man, except for digestive troubles and the effects of nervous strain.

Was made a G.C.I.E. in 1920, but does not now greatly prize an honour which he considers too reminiscent of a past connexion with the Government of India only and in some sense vassalish.

The King's eldest son Turki died in 1919, leaving issue. The following is a list of the King's immediate relatives, many of whom also have issue. Philby's *Arabia* is probably the best authority on the Sa'ud family as a whole, but does not claim to be absolutely accurate.

### Sons. All Amirs.

(2) Sa'ud ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz.—Born of a lady of Sa'udi stock. Probably not more than 32, if as much. Has for some years been Viceroy of Nejd and seldom leaves it, though he went to consult an oculist in Egypt shortly after the "Mahmal incident" of 1926. Was last in the Hejaz in 1930. Said to have had some schooling from Dr. 'Abdullah Damluji and Sheykh Hafiz Wahba, but to be in the main untutored. Resembles his father in physique and appearance. Also suffers from eye trouble, but has inherited Ibn Sa'ud's "magnetic smile." May in other respects be a chip of the old block, but has had little opportunity of displaying his quality to Europeans. Is strongly Islamic and may be more fanatical than his father.

Sa'ud is sometimes inaccurately described as Heir Apparent. A report in February 1928 that he had been declared to be Ibn Sa'ud's destined successor was not confirmed. When the Kingdom was unified in 1932 it was announced that a rule of succession would be established. It is reported that Ibn Sa'ud has since designated Sa'ud as his successor and has obtained the assent of the family, perhaps also of a wider circle; but no public announcement has been made.

P.S.—Sa'ud's designation as Heir to the Throne was formally announced on the 11th May, 1933.



(3) *Faysal ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz*.—Viceroy of the Hejaz in his father's absence and permanently President of the Council of Ministers, Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Interior, and, in theory, War. Born of a lady of the family of 'Abdul-Wahhâb in or about 1905. Educated partly by Sheykh Hâfiz Wahba. Reported intelligent and has at least had more opportunity than his brothers of cultivating his intelligence and powers of observation as he has lived mostly of late years in the comparatively civilised surroundings of Mecca and has travelled in Europe; in 1919, when he was in England; in 1926 when he visited England, France, Holland and perhaps other countries; and in 1932 when he headed the Sa'ûdi mission which visited London and many other capitals. In physique a much feebler version of his father and elder brother owing to excessive delight in the harem from his youth upwards; possibly also to the use of alcohol and possibly to a tubercular tendency, though neither is proved. Very listless and rather nervous in European company, but can rise to an occasion, as he showed in 1932 by playing his part in London, albeit that of a figurehead, with a good deal of distinction. His decorum is not known to have broken down until he reached Kuwait, where his indulgence in night-life scandalised the Sheykh and his subjects. Is supposed to have succumbed much to Syrian influences, though he seems to have got tired of Fuad Hamza during their grand tour and there have been recent signs of diminished intimacy between them. Believed not to see eye to eye with his father and joined in the onslaught by Fuad, Philby and others on Ibn Sa'ûd's principal henchman 'Abdullah Suleymân in October 1931. Although 'Abdullah Suleymân had the best of this in the end, the King has continued to treat Faysal with consideration. Received many decorations during his tour in 1932, including an honorary G.B.E.

(4) *Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz*.—Aged about 21. Headed the Sa'ûdi forces which entered Medina in 1925. Was made acting Viceroy when the Amîr Faysal went abroad in 1932, but got beyond himself and was replaced by his brother Khâlid. Met Faysal at Kuwait on his return and shared in the bout of dissipation there.

(5) *Khâlid ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz*.—Aged about 18. Acted as Viceroy of the Hejaz in 1932 (see (4) above).

(6) to (18). Children of 16 and less. The names and order of age are not quite certain. The following is an approximately correct list in alphabetical order, from various sources: 'Abdullah, 'Abdul-Muhsin, 'Abdur-Rahmân, Bandar, Fahad, Mansûr, Mash'al, Musâ'id, Mutayyib, Nâsir, Sa'd, Sultân, Talâl. Two of them, Mash'al and Sultân, are said to be adopted sons, of the family of the Beni Rashîd (*q.v.*).

*Brothers.* All Amîrs.

(19) *Muhammad ibn 'Abdurrahmân*.—Said to be a little older than the King and to be a hard and stubborn man on whom Ibn Sa'ûd keeps a tight rein. Reported in 1926-27 to be a fanatical Wahhâbi, married to a daughter of Ibn Bujâd (*q.v.*); to be in sympathy with the extremists, whose opposition to Ibn Sa'ûd was then growing; and to have left Mecca in anger. Was, nevertheless, in charge at Riyâdh in autumn of 1926, and was said to have got increased powers there. Now seldom heard of except on the occasion of journeys between Mecca and Riyâdh. Might play a rôle in the event of his surviving the King, though said to have acquiesced in proposal in 1932 to make Sa'ûd heir. Has several sons, one of whom is married to a daughter of the King.

(20) *'Abdullah ibn 'Abdurrahmân*.—Aged about 40. Described as neat and spruce in appearance and as ambitious in character, so that King keeps him also well in hand. Seems to like ships, as he visited H.M.S. *Emerald* by special request in 1926 and H.M.S. *Clematis* with King's younger sons in 1928.

(21) and (22) *Ahmed and Musâ'id*.—Younger lads of under 20, the children of the old age of 'Abdurrahmân ibn Faysal.

*'Arâif Branch.* Also Amîrs.

Certain of the King's cousins are dealt with in separate notices, but a general mention may be made of the 'Arâif as being members of a senior branch of the family by virtue of descent from Sa'ûd ibn Faysal, an elder brother of the King's father and a former ruler at Riyâdh. Their generic name of 'Arâif is one applied to raided camels, subsequently "recognised," as the root implies, and

recovered by their owners. It seems to have been given to them because they had remained in the hands of the Beni Rashîd, but escaped to Ibn Sa'ûd in the course of battle in 1904. Some of them rebelled against him in 1910, but the present members of the family form portion of the King's posse of satellite princes. Although inconspicuous, they might produce a claimant, by right of senior descent, to the throne. Various names are given in the *Almanach de Gotha* and Philby's *Arabia*. The most important of these princes, who bear individually the surname of al-'Arafa, would appear to be—

(23) *Sa'ûd ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Sa'ûd ibn Faysal*.—Married the King's sister Nûra. Seems to play a certain rôle in Ibn Sa'ûd's entourage. Probably the same Sa'ûd al-'Arafa who was described in a recent report from Kuwait as being, according to a reliable informant, a friend of the 'Ajman tribe and secretly hostile to Ibn Sa'ûd.

2. *'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Ibrahim*.

Governor of Medina. Little is known of this official except that he is believed to come from Hâil and is of considerable age. Has the reputation of being a severe and arbitrary Governor.

3. *'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Mu'ammâr*.

Governor of Jedda. A young man of apparently not more than 30. Comes of a former ruling family of Nejd, apparently the same Beni Mu'ammâr of Ayaina, who were prominent in the early days of the Wahhâbi movement and are mentioned several times in Philby's *Arabia*. Brought up principally at Riyâdh. Was Governor of Yanbu' for some time and earned a good reputation there. Was appointed to Jedda in August 1932, with the title of Amîr, on the death of Hajji 'Abdullah 'Ali Riza, a leading local merchant who had been governor with the old title of Qaimmaqam since King Huseyn's time. Ibn Mu'ammâr seems likely to be a successful governor. He is good-looking and pleasant, but pretentious, probably on the score of his blue blood. He is keen on riding and other forms of sport, and promised to try his hand at polo on receiving from Mr. Hope Gill a parting gift of sticks and balls in return for a dog's-head walking stick. Seems reasonably intelligent for a young man of his upbringing. Not related to Ibrahim ibn Mu'ammâr (*q.v.*).

4. *'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Musâ'id*.

Second cousin to the King. Governor of Hâil since 1925 or earlier. Said by the Sheykh of Kuwait in March 1932 to be only 40, but to have aged greatly owing to worry. Was much in evidence in 1929 as one of the King's right-hand men at the time of the Akhwan rebellion. Came into prominence in February 1930, when, apparently without the King's authority, he conducted a raid on the scale of a punitive expedition, which it was, in fact, intended to be, into Transjordan. Disavowed by the King at the time, but maintained in his governorate. Was in November 1932 put at the head of the principal force despatched to reduce the 'Asîr rebels, and proceeded from Riyâdh to 'Abhâ and Jizân, where he assumed supreme command of the forces in 'Asîr. Said then to be intended for the Governorate-General of the whole 'Asîr area, but now unlikely to remain longer than may be necessary to clean up and reorganise it. A man for occasions requiring drastic action.

5. *'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Shuheyf*.

Governor of Tebûk in or about 1929. Probably, despite a discrepancy of name, the same ibn Shuheyf of al-'Aridh in Nejd who took over that governorate in 1926. Later Governor of Turâba. Appointed Governor of Taif in September 1932. Commanded the troops sent from Taif in connexion with the repression of the revolt in 'Asîr in November-December 1932, and has since been concerned in the arrangements which it was hoped would end in the surrender of Hasan al-Idrîsi to Ibn Sa'ûd.

6. *'Abdul-'Aziz (ibn Hamûd) ibn Zeyd*.

Inspector of Beduin in Transjordan frontier area. Probably about 40. Comes of a Hâil family said to be related to the Beni Rashîd. Said to have been



educated in Constantinople. Sent to 'Ammān in summer of 1926 to discuss claims in respect of raids, and attended with two other Sa'ūdi delegates an abortive conference at Ma'an in September. Was one of the two Sa'ūdi delegates on tribunal which sat at Jericho from February to May 1927 in accordance with the Hadda Agreement. Was later an Assistant Governor of Jeddah. Sent to 'Ammān in August 1930 as Sa'ūdi agent at the MacDonnell investigation regarding raids. Appointed Inspector of Beduin in the frontier region in January 1931, and has since the 3rd June, 1931, held meetings at long intervals with Captain Glubb, his opposite number in Transjordan. Personally amiable, but will take no responsibility without reference to the King.

7. *'Abdul-Kerim ibn Rumman.*

Governor of Teima. Little information is available about this man, whose family is not mentioned in the 1917 volume on personalities in Arabia. Seems to be important more as a town Sheykh than as a person having necessarily much influence with Beduin, according to a statement made by the Sheykh of Kuwait in 1932. Said to have maintained the quasi-independence of the Teima oasis even against Ibn Sa'ūd. Came into some prominence at the time of the Ibn Rifāda rebellion in 1932, when he appealed to the Amir 'Abdullah, with whom he appears to have been in correspondence previously, for assistance against the danger of attack by the Akhwān mobilised to repress the rebellion. Reported to be still defiant in January 1933, when he disobeyed the King's order to return certain land to a man who had appealed to the King, and imprisoned the man instead, possibly, it was suggested, because he thought the man likely to murder him with the Royal approbation.

8. *'Abdullah ibn Blayhid.*

A leading figure among the Wahhābi Ulema. Comes from Hāil. Qādhi of Mecca after its occupation by Ibn Sa'ūd, and was described in Eldon Rutter's account of him (1925-26) as a "bent and wizened little man." Appointed Grand Qādhi of the Hejaz in January 1926. Was instrumental in May 1926 in obtaining a *fatwa* from seventeen Ulama of Medina in support of the Wahhābi policy of destroying tombs. Head of the Nejd delegates at the Moslem Congress of June 1926. Again visited Medina in November of that year in attendance on the King and in the company of 'Abdullah ibn Hasan (see 16 (1)), bent on purging the place of iniquity as Mecca had been purged. Vacated post at Mecca in 1928 and returned to Hāil. Was thought at that time to favour the extremists of the Akhwān movement. Still visits Mecca at intervals. Thought to be embarrassing in high places owing to his frankness and fanaticism. Signed the pronouncement by the Ulama of Nejd in favour of Jihād at the time of the Ibn Rifāda rebellion in 1932.

9. *'Abdullah ibn Jilāwi.*

Governor of Hasa. A first cousin of the King's late father. About the same age as the King, whom he has served consistently since he helped him to recapture Riyādh in 1902. Bore a part in the wars subsequent to that event. Stated by Philby to have been appointed Governor-General of Qasim in 1908, but has been employed in Hasa for several years past. Said to have been instrumental in 1927 in arresting temporarily the rising discontent of the Wahhābi extremists, Faysal ad-Dawish, &c., in Nejd. Has the reputation of being a strong and severe Governor. Corresponds with the Sheykh of Bahrain and seems to keep in touch with some of the Trucial Sheykh.

10. *'Abdullah Kāzim.*

A Hejazi said to be of Cossack origin. About 50 or a little more. Was employed in the Mecca Post Office in King Hussein's time. Appointed Sa'ūdi Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs in 1926 and still holds the post. Went to Port Sudan in March 1926 as one of Ibn Sa'ūd's delegates to negotiate about the E.T.C. cable and showed himself an obstructive negotiator. Was again pretty sticky in taking delivery of Marconi wireless in 1931-33.

11. *'Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn 'Aqil.*

In 1926 Governor of Jauf, but had vacated the post by March 1928, when he was put in command of a force sent to quell the disturbance created at Wejh by Hamid ibn Rifāda. Probably identical with the ibn 'Aqil who was mentioned in May 1931 as a possible candidate for the governorship of Tebuk, but was not appointed. 'Abdullah ibn 'Aqil commanded the Akhwān mobilised in June 1932 to repress the further rebellion of Hamid ibn Rifāda.

12. *'Abdullah ibn Muhammad al-Fadhli.*

Vice-President of the Legislative Council. Probably rather over 50. Principal member of the Fadhl family *q.v.* Was formerly a merchant in Jeddah. Described in 1917 as "anti-Sherif and pro-English" and as going by the sobriquet of "Englisi" in Jeddah. Put in prison at that time in Mecca for some unknown offence. Played no particular rôle subsequently (and was so little valued for brain-power as to be known as "the Sheep") until ex-King 'Ali sent him on a delegation to negotiate with Ibn Sa'ūd at Mecca. Went over definitely to Ibn Sa'ūd and acted as his representative at Rabigh for the 1925 pilgrimage, in which employment he is said to have feathered his nest. Attached to the King's son, Muhammad, as adviser when the young Amir occupied Medina later in 1925. Figured as a Hejazi delegate at the Moslem Congress in Mecca in June 1926. Obtained about the same period, in partnership with Indians settled in Mecca, a contract for motor transport, but lost it. Did better as purveyor to the Government. Sent on an unsuccessful mission to Eritrea in 1927 in connexion with negotiations for the recognition of Ibn Sa'ūd by Italy and proposed treaty arrangements. Also had some part in the treaty negotiations with Great Britain. Became assistant to the Viceroy at Mecca and so on to appointment to his present post in or before 1929. Went in that year on a mission to Persia. Alleged in the same year to have done nicely in the company of 'Abdullah Suleymān by cornering benzine, &c., just before new duties were imposed. Appears to enjoy the King's confidence in a high degree and to steer an even or waggly course between rival factions. Not impressive in appearance or conversation; still somewhat of a sheep; but wears his recent dignities with an acquired air of dignity, sobriety and sagacity, which may be a part of his success. May still have commercial interests, but has long been dissociated from the business of the other Fadhl.

13. *'Abdullah an-Naftsi.*

Important as being Ibn Sa'ūd's agent at Kuwait, where he is established as a merchant and once did a large business in rice, &c. Now elderly and less active. Seems sensible.

14. *'Abdullah Suleymān al Bassām.*

A Nejd, presumably a member of the Bassām family of 'Aneyza, described in Philby's *Arabia* as having been formerly staunch adherents of Ibn Rashid. Appointed Inspector-General of Customs in 1930. Was said then to be a penniless man of no character who had lived for two years as the guest of his namesake the Minister of Finance. Now said to be on very bad terms with the latter. Another al Bassām was mentioned in October 1932 as the consignee of goods shipped from India to Uqair.

15. *'Abdullah ibn Suleymān al Hamdān.*

Minister of Finance. Aged about 46. Of plebeian 'Aneyza origin. Started life in a small way with the Qusaibis, originally, it is said, as a coffee-boy. Spent ten years as clerk in their Bombay office. Returned to Nejd some twenty years ago. Said to have gone bankrupt as a broker. Recommended by the Qusaibis to replace his brother, who had died, as a clerk in the King's Diwān. Rose to be head of the Diwān. Became Director-General of Finance and had acquired complete control of all financial matters by September 1928, when it was remarked that he travelled in greater state than the King himself between Mecca and Jeddah. Has since been the most powerful of the King's advisers. His position was strongly assailed in October 1931 by a cabal, which included the Amir Faysal, Fuad Hamza, 'Abdullah al Fadhl (perhaps a doubtful enemy) and Mr. Philby.



Was sent for a time to lend a hand with the Tawil mission in Hasa, but had his place kept warm for him and returned to it. Was promoted in August 1932 from being Director-General of Finance to the post of Minister of Finance for the Hejaz and Nejd and its Dependencies, thus obtaining the title of Wazir, hitherto enjoyed only by the Amir Faysal. Continues to be supreme in the financial administration and has his finger in many other pies, being in effect Comptroller of the Privy Purse, Grand Master of Ordnance, Quarter-Master-General on occasion, general manager of the King's establishment of slaves and pilgrimage-organiser. Probably entirely faithful to the King, whose needs he supplies at the expense of others having demands on the Treasury. A man of rather mean appearance, but emphatically a "live wire." Ready and energetic in conversation and full of ideas about development. Detested by Fuad Hamza and not loved by many. Has for some time been very friendly with the Indian vice-consul, and has of late been at pains to cultivate relations with His Majesty's Minister. Has enriched himself and has built a pretentious house outside Jedda, which the King made use of in April 1933. Has provided posts for two relatives, viz., his brother Hamad (*q.v.*) and Muhammad, Director of the condensers at Jedda.

#### 16. *Abdul-Wahhâb, Descendants of.*

The following seem to be the most notable of the descendants of the founder of Wahhâbism:—

(1) *'Abdullah ibn Hasan.*—Is one of the leading Wahhâbi Ulema in Mecca. Played a rôle in 1926, with 'Abdullah ibn Blayhid (*q.v.*), in the Wahhâbi purging of the Holy Cities, and was in 1929 thought, like him, to favour the Akhwân extremists. Signed the pronouncement of the Ulama in favour of Jihâd at the time of the Ibn Rifâda rebellion in 1932. Now Grand Qadhi. Proud and fanatical.

(2) *Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Sheykh,* nicknamed as-Sahâbi, formerly Governor of Taif, transferred to Riyâdh in 1932 as Assistant to the Amir Sa'ûd.

(3) *'Abdul-Latif Family.*—Four sons and a probable grandson of a descendant named 'Abdul-Latif were among the ten signatories of the declaration of Jihad referred to under (1). No. (2) and the mother of the Amir Faysal (*q.v.*) also probably belong to this connexion.

#### 17. *'Abdul-Wahhâb, Seyyid.*

A man of 50 or over. Holds the post of Nâib-al-Harâm at Mecca. Was formerly Deputy for 'Asir in the Ottoman Parliament, but has never been there. Of no apparent political importance, but a familiar figure in high circles. A jolly little pook-marked man, whose deserved reputation as a raconteur is set off by his appearance.

#### 18. *'Abdul-Wahhâb Abû Malha.*

A personage of consequence in 'Asir, possibly of the Sheykhly family of Malha near Sabya, although this cannot be affirmed. Was described in 1927 as Director of Finance in 'Asir, and was in that year one of four delegates sent by Ibn Sa'ûd to negotiate with the Imâm Yahya. Probably still has the title of Director of Finance and commanded the Sa'ûdi forces which entered Sabya in November 1932.

#### 19. *'Abdur-raûf as-Sabbân.*

Born in the Hejaz forty to forty-five years ago. Grandson of an immigrant from Egypt. Educated in the Hejaz and in Egypt. Associated with his father, Hasan, and others in what was in 1917 the principal hide and skin business in Jedda and Mecca. Impressed the Hejazis at that time by his knowledge and European manners. Was made Director of Education in Jedda, but was dismissed and reverted to trade in cotton goods and skins. Edited in 1925 the anti-Sa'ûdi paper *Al-Umma* in Cairo with the help of one of the Dabbâghs. Given a post by the Amir 'Abdullah as manager of his estates in Transjordan in or before 1931. Was an active supporter of the Hizb-al-Ahrâr al-Hijâzi, and was concerned in 1932 in the press propaganda and financial arrangements of the outside promoters of movements against Ibn Sa'ûd. Seems to have gone at least once to Eritrea in this connexion. Was dismissed by the Amir 'Abdullah in the autumn of 1932 as a result of these political activities, but went on with them. Now excluded from

Egypt, Palestine and Transjordan, and has retired to Bagdad, where he is understood to have become a private secretary to ex-King 'Ali. Seems to be one of the most energetic of Ibn Sa'ûd's Hejazi enemies abroad, and may be expected to continue his efforts, wherever he is.

#### 20. *Ahmed 'Abdullah 'Ayshân.*

Stated to have brought money from Transjordan to Aden in April 1932 for Huseyn ad-Dabbâgh. Presumably a member of the Mecca family, two members of which were mentioned in 1917, one as a wealthy merchant, the other, a young man of 20 named "'Abdullah ibn 'Ashân" (perhaps identical with the subject of this notice), who associated with King Huseyn's sons and was specially intimate with the Amir 'Abdullah. 'Abdullah 'Ayshân is one of the persons now excluded from Egypt, Palestine and Transjordan on account of other anti-Sa'ûdi activities.

#### 21. *Ahmed Sa'id al-Kurdi.*

Director of Police in Jedda. Presumably of Kurdish origin, perhaps distilled through Syria. Was previously Director of Police at Rabigh and gave offence to the Legation by trying to commandeer a car which was taking the Nawab of Bahawalpur to Medina. Was transferred to Jedda in 1932 and confirmed in the post early in 1933. Is said to have stated that he would know how to put the fear of God into the inhabitants of Jedda. Is believed to be anti-foreign, but has not yet put the fear of God, further than it already exists, into the European community. Seems to be supported by persons in high quarters, including probably Mehdi Bey (*q.v.*), and, not improbably, the Amir Faysal and Fuad Bey Hamza. A man to watch but not to judge too hastily. Rides a horse, a thing now unusual in Jedda, and looks well on it. Was removed from his post in Jedda and apparently reappointed to Rabigh in 1933.

#### 22. *'Ali al-'Amâri.*

Of Nejdî origin, but settled in the Hejaz before Ibn Sa'ûd conquered it. Probably about 50. Formerly a merchant. Became Director of Customs in Jedda in 1926 and, later, Inspector-General of Customs. Feathered his nest and put a good deal of money into building a house, which he presented or sold to the King, but for which, if the latter is the case, he has never been paid. This is the house called the "Green Palace" outside Jedda. Appointed member of an Inspectorate of Government Departments in 1930 and Assistant Governor of Jedda early in 1931. Exercised some authority in this post, but does not appear to count for much nowadays. Probably a rascal, but cheery even now that he has gone poor again.

#### 23. *'Ali Ridha Family* (or Reza as they spell it themselves in English).

A rich merchant family in Jedda, of Persian origin. Have very important business connexions in India and elsewhere, and are agents for the Turner Morrison Line, which has a monopoly of transporting pilgrims from India by sea. The best known members of the family were Zeynal 'Ali Ridha, who died some years ago, his son Qâsim, formerly a M.P. in Turkey and a man of parts, and 'Abdullah 'Ali Ridha, who combined business with the post of Governor of Jedda from King Huseyn's time until he died in 1932. The principal members of the family now in Jedda are:—

(1) *Yusuf ibn Zeynal 'Ali Ridha,* a pleasant man of 45 or 50, who has been much in India; and

(2) *Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah 'Ali Ridha,* a bullet-headed but agreeable lad of little more than 20.

Other members of the family are met with elsewhere. The family has Syrian family connexions, 'Abdullah having married a Syrian or Syro-Persian lady, and his son Mohammad having married last year the daughter of a well-known but decayed Syrian merchant in Jedda, Sadiq al Khoja. The latter is also connected with Huseyn Awayni (*q.v.*).

#### 24. *'Ali Taha.*

Assistant Governor of Jedda since 1928, and, in addition, Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs since early in 1932. A Hejazi of about 40. Rose from a small post as secretary to the Governor. Cadaverous



and unhealthy, with a mouthful of gold teeth. Speaks Turkish well. Well meaning, and not without intelligence, but frightened of his own shadow. Completely ineffective, except on the rarest possible occasions, in connexion with foreign affairs. Normally serves as no more than a transmitter of messages to and from Mecca.

#### 25. *M. Amin Shanqiti.*

Said to be a recent import from Shanqit, somewhere in North-West Africa. At one time resided in Mecca, and became later a member of the Idrisi's Council, apparently with the sanction of Ibn Sa'ud. Was a signatory in this capacity of the decision which signed 'Asir away to Ibn Sa'ud in October 1930. Latterly concerned in anti-Sa'udi activities in connexion with 'Asir. Came to notice in that connexion in July 1932, when it was reported that he had returned to 'Ammân from Damascus, whither he had gone on the Amir 'Abdullah's business and to be a bone of contention between the Amir and his Government. Seems to have been back in 'Asir at the time of the rebellion of November-December 1932.

#### 26. *M. Amin Tamimi.*

A Palestinian from Hebron, son of an official at Tulkaram. Came to the Hejaz in 1927. Had known Fuad Hamza in Palestine, and was employed by him in the Sa'udi Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Attached to Sheykh 'Abdul-'Aziz Ibn Zeyd for the purpose of the MacDonnell enquiry, and left with him in August 1930. Fell out with his chief, and was accused *inter alia* of selling a cypher. Returned separately to the Hejaz and was re-employed in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Was probably still protected by Fuad Hamza, but left the Ministry in or about May 1931, and served for a short time with Sharqieh (Limited) in Jedda. Was by then very much under a cloud, and, according to his own story, had to use a ruse to get away on the 6th August, 1931. He had been accused of some irregularity in accounts, and may already have been under suspicion of stealing documents. Tried later to sell certain copies of British secret papers to the Embassy in Constantinople. Surrendered these voluntarily to the Residency at Cairo in June 1932, but may still possess Sa'udi documents. A very nasty young man, unlikely to return to Sa'udi Arabia, but worth mentioning because of his approaches to British authorities elsewhere. Was mentioned by the Amir 'Abdullah to General Wauchope, on the 6th September, 1932, as one of a number of important and dangerous members of the Independence party in Palestine, against whom precautions should be taken.

#### 27. *'Aqil Family of Mecca.*

It is difficult to place various bearers of the name of 'Aqil, who may or may not be related to the Muhammad ibn 'Aqil, mentioned in 1917 as a respectable Mecca merchant, whose grandfather, a learned and holy man, had prophesied that the English would take Mecca. A person of the same name, one of a Hadhrami family deported from Mokalla in 1928, died at Aden in 1931, leaving sons, of whom one, viz. :—

(1) *'Isa ibn Muhammad ibn 'Aqil* was secretary to the Imâm's son, Ahmed.

More definitely connected with Mecca are the following :—

(2) *Amin ibn Ishâq ibn 'Aqil*, said to be son of a sister of Huseyn ad-Dabbâgh. Arrested at Mecca in June-July 1932 and deported to Riyâdh.

(3) *'Abbâs 'Aqil*, one of the conspirators against Ibn Sa'ud, said to have come on pilgrimage with two other conspirators and to have gone later to Mokalla to buy cartridges at Bir Ali.

The last-named may be identical with—

(4) *'Aqil 'Abbâs Bardaghash*, mentioned in reports from Aden as a Meccan, or, according to others, an 'Asiri, associated with the Dabbâghs.

#### 28. *Ba-Jubayr Family.*

An important merchant family among the numerous Hadhramis settled in Jedda. The most important present member of it, Ahmed Ba-Jubayr, was suspected in 1932 of complicity in the ad-Dabbâgh plot, and was arrested and deported to Riyâdh in June-July, but was subsequently allowed to return. As

he had apparently been born in the Hadhramaut, it became a question whether the Legation should intervene, but his relatives themselves very sensibly preferred that it should not.

#### 29. *Ba-Nâjâ Family.*

A merchant family of humble Hadhrami origin, long settled in the Hejaz. They have considerable property in Egypt, and are still wealthy. The principal members are the following :—

(1) *'Abdur-Rahmân*, the patriarch. Probably over 70, and lives a retired life, but is still going strong as a man of business.

(3) *Ahmed*, son of (1), had quarrelled with him before 1917. Was King Huseyn's Minister of Finance in that year, and was ridiculed for his airs, besides being condemned for his private vices. Returned to Egypt, but returned to the Hejaz in 1932.

(3) *M. Sâlih Ba-Nâjâ*, another son.

(4) *Sufyân Ba-Nâjâ*, a slave of the family, but now sole manager of the property. He was treasurer to (2) whilst he was Minister. Is a Jedda notable; lives a quiet life and is respected, though he is a slave.

All these are well-known in Jedda, where (4) is concerned in a motor transport concern. The family appear to enjoy considerable favour under the present régime.

#### 30. *Ba-Sâhi Family of 'Asir.*

The principal member of this Hadhrami family, Muhammad Yahya, played an important rôle in 'Asir at the time of the Great War. They would appear to be still people of consequence there, as three of them were concerned in the arrangements for the practical annexation of 'Asir by Ibn Sa'ud in October 1930, viz. :—

(1) *Muhammad Yahya 'Awadh Ba-Sâhi*.—A member of the Legislative Council which signed the decision. Probably the same as the person named above. Seems to have tried to dissuade the Idrisi from revolting in October 1932.

(2) *'Abdul-Qâdir ibn Muhammad ibn 'Awadh Ba-Sâhi*, also a member of the Legislative Council. Seems to have helped to get the Idrisi to fall in with the plans of the Dabbâgh conspirators in 1932.

(3) *Muhammad 'Abdullah Ba-Sâhi*.—One of the Idrisi mission sent to Mecca to complete the arrangements for annexation in 1930.

#### 31. *Bujâd (or Humayd) Family.*

A leading family in the notoriously fanatical Ghutghut section of the 'Ateyba tribe. A confusing effect is produced by the use in past reports of the names Sultân ibn Bujâd, ibn Humayd ibn Bujâd and ibn Bujâd *tout court*, but they would appear all to apply to one and the same man. This is assumed in what follows regarding :—

(1) *Sultân ibn Humayd ibn Bujâd*.—Once one of Ibn Sa'ud's stalwarts and one of the commanders of his troops when they took Mecca in 1924. Had a daughter married to the King's brother Muhammad. Noted early in 1927 as one of the extremists who were then inclining against the King. Became reconciled with him later, but finally stood in with Ibn Sa'ud's opponents in the Nejd rebellion of 1929 and was accounted second only to Faysal ad-Dawish in importance. Was one of the earlier leaders to fall into the King's hands and was imprisoned at Riyâdh in the spring of that year. Appears to be still in close confinement, as no record has been found of the death of Sultân ibn Bujâd, the best known of the names cited above, and "ibn Humayd" was mentioned in a recent report as one of the prisoners who were receiving more lenient treatment than before, though, unlike the others, he was still not allowed to see his womenfolk. May still prove important, as he had a strong hold on his tribesmen, some of whom have been reported sullen over his imprisonment.

(2) *Nâif ibn Faysal ibn Humayd*.—A pretender to the chieftainship of the 'Ateyba, but moved to Iraq in 1924, having been ousted by No. (1). Played with the idea of recovering his position in June 1929 and sent a minor relative, 'Obeyd, to spy out the land, but was apparently dissuaded by King Faisal from going ahead. Mentioned in 1932 as being still a refugee in Iraq and as a possible aspirant to the hand of Mazyûna, sister of Faysal ad-Dawish, but the engagement or marriage was denied.



32. *Dabbāgh Family.*

A Mecca family of "Moorish" (i.e., some North-West Africa) origin. Appear to be Seyyids. Became prominent in 1932 in connexion with plot behind the revolt of Ibn Rifāda and the preparations for the retarded revolt in 'Asir. The family is numerous. Certain members of it still reside in the Hejaz, including two who were arrested and deported to Riyādh in June-July 1932, viz. :—

- (1) *Ibrāhīm ibn 'Abdullah* and
- (2) *'Isa ibn 'Abdullah*.

More important are the following persons abroad :—

(3) *Huseyn ibn 'Abdullah*, brother of the above. Migrated to Mokalla in or about 1926. Has since done school-mastering in South-West Arabia and has been an active intriguer against Ibn Sa'ūd. Went to India in 1927 to enlist support for the Hizb-al-Ahrār al-Hijāzi and their National Pact. Sought, and probably enlisted, the support of Shauqat Ali, who, with his brother, had been violently at loggerheads with Ibn Sa'ūd at the Moslem Congress of June 1926. Went to Egypt and perhaps to Transjordan in 1929. Said to have attended Moslem Congress at Jerusalem in December 1931, when persons concerned in Hizb-al-Ahrār seem to have devised a pendant organisation called Jami'at ad-Dif'a lil-Hijāz. Was using Aden as base early in 1932, but left in summer owing to adverse attitude of British authorities and seems to have since worked mainly in Eritrea. Now excluded from Egypt, Palestine and Transjordan.

(4) *M. 'Alī ibn 'Abdullah*, another brother. Less conspicuous, but also very active. Took a hand in the actual revolt in 'Asir. Reported drowned at Jizān, but report was contradicted later.

(5) *M. Tāhīr ibn Mas'ūd*, uncle of the above. Born in 1890. Had some employment under King Huseyn. Obtained British-protected passport at Cairo in 1926 on strength of alleged subjection to Sultan of Mokalla. Author of letter from Lahej to Amīr Shākīr of the 20th February, 1932, which fell into hands of Sa'ūdi Government and revealed plans of conspirators. Seems to have gone further east, as he arrived at Aden from Singapore early in June 1932. Has since been very mobile, visiting Eritrea, Egypt, Palestine, Transjordan and 'Iraq. Now excluded from Egypt, Palestine and Transjordan. Was understood in January 1933 to be heading back to Massawa, and perhaps thence to Aden and the Hadhramaut.

Other members of the family need not be enumerated, but they all seem to hang together and to have *attaches* with Hashimites. One, Mas'ūd, a hanger-on at 'Ammān, was closely concerned in the Ibn Rifāda affair and was killed with Ibn Rifāda. The family also have *attaches* with the Idrīsīs, although there is nothing to explain one mention of (3) above as Huseyn bin 'Abdullah ad-Dabbāgh al-Idrīsī.

33. *Dawish Family.*

A leading family in the Mutayr tribe. Its best-known member, Faysal ad-Dawish, famous as a raider, as one of Ibn Sa'ūd's principal lieutenants and as a rebel against him, died as a State prisoner at Riyādh in October 1931. His name is, however, still potent in Eastern Arabia, where he was regarded as more than an ordinary sheykh—a kingly man and a king maker. This gives importance to his sons, two of whom have figured in recent reports from Kuwait.

(1) *Bandar ibn Faysal ad-Dawish*.—Still a young man. Said to be looked to by the Mutayr as the leader they desire, but to be himself very cautious and unwilling to move at present. Reported in December 1932 to have countered a question by Ibn Sa'ūd as to whom the Mutayr wanted for a leader by saying "No one but Your Majesty."

(2) *Al-Humaydi ibn Faysal ad-Dawish*.—Visited Ibn Sa'ūd at Riyādh in the autumn of 1932, when the King was making efforts to reconcile the ex-rebel Mutayr and 'Ajmān, still hostile to him, and was well received and rewarded.

The ladies of this family seem to count. The political agent at Kuwait, who had befriended them when Faysal was surrendered to Ibn Sa'ūd in January 1930, was visited by various of them on several occasions in 1932. They included Faysal's mother, who hid bitter hatred of the King beneath copious praises;

a sister, whose rumoured marriage to a Harb Sheykh was regarded as an augury of reconciliation between his tribe and the Mutayr, but was afterwards denied, and a cousin, still a woman of considerable charm and humour, who had been married to Sheykh Mubārak of Kuwait, to a deceased son of Faysal ad-Dawish and, lastly, as prize of war, to Ibn Sa'ūd's brother 'Abdullah.

34. *Dehlavi Family.*

An Indian family long settled in Mecca. Wahhābis by faith. Still British, but allowed to own real property, and so much identified with the Hejaz that two members of it sat as representatives in the National Conference of June 1931. They were—

(1) *'Abdullah Dehlavi*, elder brother (about 57 years old); under Sherifian régime was member of various committees; is a trusted adviser of Ibn Sa'ūd, whom he has supported from beginning. Together with (2) is prime mover in the 'Ain Zubeyda Committee.

(2) *Obeidullah Dehlavi*, younger brother—aged about 53. Chiefly concerned in management of the family Motor Transport Company "El-Nijah." He is an intimate friend of Sheykh 'Abdullah Suleymān, and like his brother is a trusted adviser of the King. Both brothers interest themselves privately in affairs of the Sa'ūdi Government, but are not office seekers.

35. *Fadhl (al-Fazal) Family.*

Nejdis of 'Aneyza origin long settled in the Hejaz. An original 'Abdullah had at least five sons, all now deceased, with one possible exception. Each of these had issue. Members of the first and second generations after the original 'Abdullah were concerned in firms doing important business in the Hejaz and India, where they had a high reputation, enhanced by their position as business agents of Ibn Sa'ūd, until 1930. Family differences and bad trade led to the collapse of their business at Bombay and Karachi in that year. The two partners most actively concerned in the business in India absconded to the Hejaz, where a third tried to dissociate himself from the partnership. The affairs of the family have for some years been the subject of very complicated litigation and have engaged the attention of various British authorities for reasons too long to recapitulate. The family still have influential connexions in the Hejaz, and several members of it have been given employment by Ibn Sa'ūd. Apart from 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah, who is the subject of a separate notice, the following deserve mention :—

(1) *Muhammad*, son of the 'Abdullah just mentioned. In business in Jedda and does a tidy trade in benzine, &c.

(2) *Ibrāhīm ibn Abdurrahmān*.—One of the two who absconded from India in 1930. Appointed a member of the Legislative Council in October 1930. Became later a secretary to the Amīr Faysal. Was called on to resign, ostensibly on grounds of ill-health, by Amīr Faysal. He is now living in Mecca and engaged in trade in an unimportant way; but is still said to enjoy the confidence of Amīr Faysal.

(3) *Muhammad ibn Abdurrahmān ibn 'Abdullah*.—Was a partner in the firm which collapsed in India in 1930, but resided in Jedda and tried to dissociate himself from the other partners, his brother and cousin.

(4) *'Abdullah ibn Ibrāhīm ibn 'Abdullah*.—Private secretary to the Amīr Faysal in 1926. Afterwards one of the partners who absconded from India. Selected in 1931 for the post of Chargé d'Affaires in Holland, under scheme which did not materialise for having a Legation there with the Sa'ūdi Minister in London as Minister. Appointed Treasurer to the Government later in 1931, as a result of the cabal against 'Abdullah Suleymān.

(5) *Ibrāhīm ibn Suleymān*.—Son-in-law of father of (4), and has taken the place of (2) as Rais-i-Diwān of the Amīr Faysal. Is an important official and enjoys Amīr Faysal's complete confidence.

36. *Fahad ibn Zu'ayr.*

Late Governor of 'Asir. Was head of the mission sent to 'Asir in May 1930 to make the arrangements which subsequently culminated in its practical annexation by Ibn Sa'ūd. Was later appointed Amīr, though probably not the first to hold the post. Reported to Ibn Sa'ūd with increasing urgency in the autumn of



1932 that the Idrisi was getting beyond himself. The Idrisi, professing complete loyalty to the King, complained bitterly of Fahad's rough treatment. The King, anxious to placate the Idrisi, steered a middle course and sent a commission to investigate. Before it could reach the spot the Idrisi had gone into open revolt and Fahad had to escape from his seat of government at Jizān. Was little heard of for some time afterwards, but was appointed Governor of Qunfida in or about June 1933.

### 37. *Farhan ibn Mashhūr.*

A chief belonging to the Syrian Ruwalla tribe, and hardly within the scope of this report. Nevertheless, deserves inclusion because of the important rôle he has played in regard to Sa'ûdi Arabia. Quarrelled with his own paramount chief in 1926, severed his connexion with Syria and embraced Wahhâbism. Was concerned in raids from Nejd into Iraq and Transjordan in and before 1929. Took a leading part in the rebellion against Ibn Sa'ûd that year, in association more particularly with the 'Ajman. Described at that time by the Political Agent at Kuwait, who saw him personally, as a tall man of about 40, speaking Nejdî Arabic, with an occasional break into Damascus patois. Escaped into Iraq on the collapse of the rebellion and became the subject of an acrimonious controversy, owing to Ibn Sa'ûd's contention that not only the Iraq Government but His Majesty's Government were bound by definite undertakings to surrender him. Arrangements were finally made for him to be shepherded circuitously from Iraq to Jedda, but he broke away in Syria and has since remained there. His Majesty's Government maintained their consistent theory that they had no responsibility and Ibn Sa'ûd grudgingly allowed the controversy to be laid during Nuri Pasha's treaty-making visit to the Hejaz in April 1931. Ibn Mashhūr has since kept quiet, but he is a man of energy and likely to reappear some day. His natural *attaches* are still probably with the Hashimites and Nuri Sha'alan, although his adventures have clouded his relations with both in the recent past.

### 38. *Fawzân as-Sabîq.*

Sa'ûdi agent in Egypt. Aged about 45. Belongs by origin to the 'Uqeyl, the guild, as it were, of recognised caravan-guides. Educated in a Turkish school at Ammân. Is by profession a dealer in camels and horses and still appears to do this business. Was Ibn Sa'ûd's agent in Damascus prior to 1924. Moved in that year to Cairo, where he occupies a similar position, not officially recognised in any way, although he does passport work, &c. Is described by Mr. Smart as a devout Moslem, plain, slow, courteous and old-fashioned; politically rather innocent, but possessed of a certain native shrewdness.

### 39. *Fuad Bey Hamza.*

Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs. A Druze from the Lebanon, born about 1900. Educated in Turkish schools in Syria, the Teachers' Training College, Beirut, and the Syrian Protestant College, Beirut. Was Inspector of Schools at Damascus for a time. Obtained a post as clerk under the Palestine Department of Public Health in 1921. Resigned after a few months and took service under the Department of Education as a teacher in Acre. Transferred in 1922 to a secondary school in Jerusalem as teacher in English and remained until 1926. Studied simultaneously at the Law School, got a Certificate of Legal Studies in 1925 and qualified in five subjects, including Constitutional History and Public International Law, for the Diploma, but did not complete the course. Had a uniformly good record in Palestine, but was mixed up in politics and the Druze insurrectionary movement. May have feared arrest, although he was not, in fact, in danger of it. Left for Egypt on the 2nd December, 1926. Apparently was to go to India on a Syro-Palestinian delegation, but was drawn to the Hejaz, where, after giving English lessons for a time, he was taken into the Ministry for Foreign Affairs by Yusuf Yasin, then acting for Dr. 'Abdullah Danlûji. Became Acting Minister in July 1928, when Dr. Danlûji left on a mission, never to return. Had probably worked earlier to undermine Danlûji's position. Remained Acting Minister until the Amir Faysal became titular Minister with Fuad as Under-Secretary, but still effective head of the Ministry in December 1930. Retained his post, with a seat on the Council of Ministers when the latter was constituted early in 1932. Prefers to call himself in English Deputy Minister. Visited Europe for the first time as a member of the Sa'ûdi Mission

under the Amir Faysal in the spring of 1932 and did all the real business. Was made an honorary K.B.E. during the visit to London.

Fuad Hamza is alert, intelligent, well informed on matters pertaining to his work and industrious. Speaks English well and Turkish, but is hampered by lack of more than elementary French. Equally devoted to his own ambitions and to the cause of Arab nationalism, serving Ibn Sa'ûd as its exponent, though inclined sometimes to despair of the system of which he has made himself part. Keeps in touch with other Nationalists in Palestine, and probably Syria. Is used by the King as his instrument for foreign affairs, and makes the most of his position, but probably does not enjoy Ibn Sa'ûd's full confidence, so that his power varies. Very hostile to 'Abdullah Suleymân and took part in the unsuccessful drive against him in 1931. Conforms to Wahhâbism without conviction. Would like to see Sa'ûdi Arabia, a name of which he was one of the authors, develop on modern, more or less constitutional lines. Likes drafting laws. Would go to great lengths for the causes he has at heart, but is seldom, if ever, dishonest in diplomacy. Rather bumptious and sometimes difficult to deal with, but responds to personal handling. Sometimes spoken of as anti-British, sometimes even as pro-Soviet; probably wrongly, except in so far as his attitude towards foreign Powers is determined by Arab nationalism. May have put by a modest amount of money, although the only traceable record of anything approaching corruption is an allegation in 1929 that he bought large stocks of tobacco before promulgating a decree imposing new duties.

Taufiq Hamza, Fuad's brother, serves under him in the Ministry, but does not merit a separate notice. Speaks French.

### 40. *Gâbil Family* (more correctly Qâbil, but they use the other spelling).

Important merchants in Jedda of African slave origin. Take their name from an extinct Jedda family, one of whom owned the father, later a freedman. The firms consists of the two following brothers:—

(1) *Suleymân Amân Gâbil*.—Aged about 60. Worked up an important business connexion with Medina, India, &c., in his early days. Paid President of the Municipality in Turkish times, and held the same post under King Huseyn. Had at that time a poor reputation for honesty. Took a leading part in the movement by notables of Jedda and Mecca to compel King Huseyn's abdication in October 1924. Went to Port Sudan in March 1926 as one of the delegates sent to negotiate about the Eastern Telegraph Company cable and was more helpful than his colleague, 'Abdullah Kâzim (*q.v.*). Figured as a Hejazi delegate at the Moslem Congress in Mecca in June 1926. A Vicar of Bray under three successive régimes, but can be outspoken, as when he displeased the King by his frank criticism of fiscal policy at the "National Conference" of June 1931. Described in 1928 as "a lively and entertaining host." Still pleasant to meet and apt to be met in Royal circles. Speaks moderate Turkish.

(2) *'Abdul-Qâdir Amân Gâbil*, several years younger than Suleymân, in whose wake he follows at a distance.

### 41. *Hâfiz (Hâfidh) Wahba.*

Sa'ûdi Minister in London. An Egyptian born probably between 1885 and 1890. Educated at Al-Azhar. Mixed up in Nationalist and pan-Islamic politics in early manhood and was closely associated with 'Abdul-'Azîz Shawish. Definitely anti-British at time of Great War and said to have been deported from India. Later started a school at Kuwait and passed thence into Ibn Sa'ûd's service. Became tutor to the Amir Faysal and accompanied the prince to London in 1919. Was one of Ibn Sa'ûd's delegates at the abortive Kuwait Conference in 1923-24. In supreme charge of the civil side of the Administration at Mecca in 1925, with a viceregal title, and did well. Read the King's inaugural address at the Moslem Congress in Mecca in June 1926. Much employed on missions and negotiations during the ensuing years. *Inter alia* took part in negotiations with Sir G. Clayton in 1925, 1927 and 1928 and expounded Ibn Sa'ûd's views and fears regarding Italian policy in the Red Sea, Bolshevik activity and Hashimite sovereignty in neighbouring countries to the Residency at Cairo early in 1928. During all this period waged a ding-dong struggle against the Syrian influences around the King, and had ups and downs. Was occulted towards the end of 1926, but returned to favour soon after and became Assistant Viceroy beside the



Amir Faysal. Thought to have indisposed the Amir by his masterfulness as a tutor and his disregard as Assistant Viceroy for the Amir's position. Relegated in July 1928 to the post of Director-General of Education. Went to London in 1929 to represent Ibn Sa'ūd at the International Postal Congress. While there was selected for the post of Minister in London, but did not take up the post for over a year, during which interval he went on a sort of undefined mission to Kuwait and was also employed much about the King's person, though he appeared on the whole to have lost ground to the Syrians. Has during his tenure of the Legation in London represented his country on international occasions, at Geneva and elsewhere, and has only once been back in Sa'ūdi Arabia. Was designated in 1931 to be Minister at The Hague, but the arrangements have never materialised for reasons of economy.

Hāfiz Wahba has sown his political wild oats. His anti-British sentiments are supposed to have undergone a change in or before 1928, when he was reported as being accustomed to say that, as regards Egypt, he would always be against Great Britain, but, as a servant of Ibn Sa'ūd, believed the King's interest to lie in friendly relations with His Majesty's Government. He has certainly shown himself well-disposed in London, and has on occasion been distinctly helpful. He is a good propagandist for Ibn Sa'ūd on the lecture platform and in society. Neither taciturn nor talkative, he appeals by his sense of humour and looks anything but a Wahhābi (except that he abstains from alcohol and tobacco) at the Hyde Park Hotel or the Savoy. Likes the theatre too. Speaks moderate English, but is not fluent. A useful servant to the King, whose respect he commands, but not probably his entire confidence.

#### 42. *Hamad Suleymān.*

Under-Secretary of State for Finance, brother of 'Abdullah Suleymān, *q.v.*, and has worked under him. Acted for him as Director-General of Finance during his relegation to Hasa towards the end of 1931. Was appointed Wakil or Under-Secretary when 'Abdullah was made Wazir or full Minister in August 1932. Has been employed on missions in 'Asir, notably in November 1932, when he was sent with Khālid-al-Qarqani to investigate the differences between the Idrisi and Ibn Sa'ūd's Governor. They were too late to reach the spot before the Idrisi went into open revolt, but have since been standing by in 'Asir.

#### 43. *Hamdi Bey.*

Director-General of Military Organisation. Perhaps 40 to 45. Believed to be an 'Iraqi Kurd and to have risen to non-commissioned rank in the Turkish army. Was a colonel in the army of King Huseyn, but passed to the service of Ibn Sa'ūd and was officer commanding troops at Yanbu' before 1928. Became Officer Commanding in Jedda in that year. Appointed Director-General of Military Organisation in 1931 in succession to Faudhi Bey Kawokji. Presents all the appearance of a man who might be good in a rough and tumble; none of having the education necessary to create anything serious out of the embryo regular army, as Faudhi Bey might have done had he not lost favour. Hamdi seems to be a man of indifferent character, with a gift for intrigue, which he displayed in connexion with the vicissitudes of the British Staff of the Hejaz Air Force in 1931-32. Acts on occasion as A.D.C. to the King, attending him on his visits to Jedda and being sent to meet sloops, &c.

#### 44. *Hamud al-Bagāwi.*

Officer in charge on the Kuwait frontier, with headquarters at Jariya. Appointed to this post in August 1932. Fourth person to hold it since 1930. A man of very evil reputation, described as having been chiefly responsible for all the raiding and killing in Kuwait territory eight or nine years ago. Known in Kuwait as the "butcher" of 'Abdullah ibn Jilūwi, Governor of Hasa, and apparently chosen for his present post to tighten up the embargo on trade between Kuwait and Nejd, responsibility for which had been transferred to ibn Jilūwi.

#### 45. *Hamud ibn Ibrahim.*

Appointed Governor of Yanbu' in August 1931. Known only from the announcement of this.

#### 46. *Hamza al Ghauth al Madani.*

Understood to be consul-general designate for Java. A Hejazi of Medina, aged over 40. Said to have been educated in Turkish schools and to have frequented Turkish society. Sided with Turks at time of Arab revolt, and edited an anti-Huseyn paper at Medina in their interest. Continued to be anti-Huseyn after the success of the revolt and fled. Said to have been sentenced to death by default during his absence. Seems, nevertheless, to have been given an important post at Damascus, which he continued to hold under King Faisal's régime there, even after King Huseyn had launched against him an accusation, probably trumped up, of having stolen valuables from the Prophet's Tomb. Was in Ibn Sa'ūd's service by end of 1923 and was one of his delegates at the abortive Kuwait Conference of 1923-24, an appointment which led to a revival by the 'Iraqi delegates of the robbery charge. Became Assistant Governor of Medina after its occupation by Sa'ūdi forces in 1925. Was later employed in the Palace. Selected in 1931 for the proposed consulate-general at Batavia, to the creation of which the Netherlands Government agreed, but which has never been opened, probably owing to financial difficulties. Filled in time as a member of the Legislative Council, whence he was transferred to the Amir Sa'ūd's Diwān in September 1932. Came in King's train to Mecca in March 1933. Much of a palace man evidently.

#### 47. *Hashim Daghestani, called Sayyid Hashim.*

A Hejazi, aged perhaps 50 or more, descended from a family of Mutawwifs who derived their name from the fact that they looked after the pilgrims from Daghestan. This was a lucrative business in the good old days, and Sayyid Hashim was formerly well off. He seems to have lost a great deal during the war between Ibn Sa'ūd and King 'Alī, and has also lost heavily by being loaded up with now worthless roubles. Was formerly employed in the Awqaf Department, apparently in King Huseyn's time. Appointed "Chief Revenue Officer" under the new régime in January 1926, and was later local Director of Finance in Jedda. Ejected from this post and appointed a member of the Inspectorate of Government Departments in 1930. Has since been employed in various financial connexions and hunts in couples with Sheykh 'Abdullah Suleymān, but his real importance lies in the fact that he is said to have an independent position as a sort of personal secret service agent of the King, and to correspond with the latter, when His Majesty is in Nejd, about persons and things in the Hejaz. Is on intimate terms with the Indian vice-consul, to whom he sometimes supplies information. This connexion was of some value during the early stages of the 'Asir revolt of November-December 1932.

#### 48. *Hithlayn Family.*

People of importance in the 'Ajman tribe, much concerned in the Nejd revolt of 1929. Its principal member, Dhaydān ibn Hithlayn, was slain treacherously in April of that year. The following other members of the family deserve mention:—

(1) *Nāif ibn Hithlayn* (nicknamed Abū 'l Kilāb).—Succeeded Dhaydān and carried on the revolt, but surrendered in January 1930 to the British authorities in Kuwait, and was in due course handed over to Ibn Sa'ūd. Has since been a State prisoner at Riyādh, closely confined.

(2) *Hāzim ibn Hithlayn* also took an active part in the revolt, and was one of two leaders who in July 1929 visited Kuwait in the hope of enlisting support. Was fighting together with Nāif in October. Eventual fate unknown.

(3) *Khālid ibn Muhammad ibn Hithlayn*, described as a "debonair and handsome young warrior." Is one of the Mutayr and 'Ajman Sheykh living in 'Iraq under King Faisal's protection. Visited Kuwait in 1932 at the time of the Ibn Rifāda affair, apparently to size up the chances of new anti-Sa'ūdi action.

#### 49. *Huseyn al 'Awayni.*

A young Syrian merchant established in Jedda. An enterprising fellow, who derives some importance from being a friend of Fuad Hamza and Yusuf Yasin



and having connexions in Manchester; notably with another Syrian, 'Abdul-Ghāni Ydlibi, the naturalised British head of a small company there. This association was close early in 1932, when Ydlibi visited Jedda in order to work up business and with great ideas of getting concessions of all sorts. They claimed to have important support in Lancashire, and specifically that of the Calico Printers' Association (Limited). It was understood in 1932 that 'Awayni was leaving Jedda for good, but he returned. His last important appearance was in February or March 1933, when he went to Riyādh on behalf of certain merchants to try and dissuade the King from proceeding with the concession to the ex-Khedive's group for the creation of a National Bank. A man likely to have ups and downs of fortune, in dealing with whom commercially great care should be used.

#### 50. *M. Huseyn Nasif.*

A well-known Hejazi of Jedda of Egyptian origin. Aged about 50 or more. Inherited much property from his father, 'Omar Nasif, who was a notable personage in Turkish times, as well as the agency in Jedda of the Sherifs of the 'Abadilah branch. Occupies the largest house in Jedda and was once very prosperous, but is now probably less so. Was said in 1917 to have lost favour with King Huseyn, who had previously been accustomed to stay with him when in Jedda. Was said also to be desirous of British naturalisation at that time. Described as having been a Wahhābi by conviction, even before the Sa'ūdī invasion. Deported to 'Aqaba during King 'Ali's short reign. Figured as a Hejazi delegate at the Moslem Congress in Mecca in June 1926. Was given the privilege of putting Ibn Sa'ūd up during the years following the fall of Jedda, but has not done so since the King acquired the "Green Palace." Has not held office, as was expected, under the Sa'ūdī régime, perhaps owing to doubt as to his trustworthiness. Rather a dark horse nowadays and may both dislike and be disliked by the régime, but keeps quiet. Said to be a good Arabic scholar and possesses what passes in Jedda for a remarkable library. An aldermanic figure.

#### 51. *Ibrahim ibn Mu'ammār.*

Head of the Amir Sa'ūd's diwān, or secretariat, at Riyādh. Was formerly a well-known propagandist and press correspondent for Arabic papers and seems to have spent some years in Egypt and India. Probably identical with the "Muammār Bey" mentioned in the Jedda report for February 1926 as having been Nejdī representative in Egypt and having just been appointed "head of the Foreign Political Intelligence Department and chief adviser to the King." Would appear to have become head of the King's diwān soon after, probably in July 1926. Little known in European circles, but probably important in Ibn Sa'ūd's entourage. Was transferred in September 1932 to the diwān of the Amir Sa'ūd. This transfer, if effective, need not be regarded as relegation to an inferior post, as it may quite well have been part of a plan to equip the Amir for his probable rôle of successor to the throne. (See 1 (2).) Ibrahim ibn Mu'ammār was described by the Indian vice-consul in 1928 as a good-hearted and pro-British man. Selected in May 1933 for post of Chargé d'Affaires at Bagdad in place of Rusheyd Pasha (*q.v.*).

#### 52. *'Id Rawwāf.*

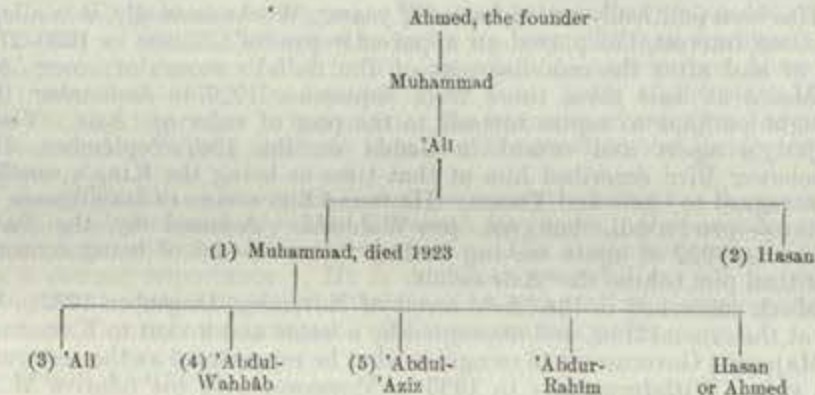
Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, formerly Sa'ūdī consul in Damascus. Born about 1898. One of a Sherari family which migrated from Jauf to Damascus in 1910. Family not highly considered in Damascus, but 'Id's father maintained close connexion with Ibn Sa'ūd and was helpful to him in negotiations with the Turks. He, the father, made a fortune in camel-dealing and left wealth to his two sons. 'Id was also a camel merchant before being appointed to his Damascus post in 1929 in succession to his brother Yasin. Had then only had primary education, but was stated last year to be busily improving on it. Was considered by His Majesty's present consul in Damascus rather stupid, though pleasant and useful. Well informed on local currents of thought and pushes in Syrian nationalist circles, without apparently carrying

much weight, the idea of an Arab Empire with Ibn Sa'ūd as a suitable ruler for it. The brother Yasin Rawwāf, whom he succeeded, is said to have become Governor of Medina in 1929-30. He was appointed second assistant to the Viceroy of the Hejaz in September 1930, but has faded out of Sa'ūdī official life and now lives at Damascus.

P.S.—'Id Rawwāf was superseded as consul at Damascus by Rusheyd Pasha (*q.v.*) in May 1933 and appointed an Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

#### 53. *Idrisi Family.*

Founded by Ahmed al Idrisi, a native of Fez, who became a notable religious teacher at Mecca and created a Tariqa, or school of religious doctrine. Moved on to Sabya, in 'Asir, where he acquired land and died in the odour of sanctity about 1837 and where his tomb is still venerated. The Idrisi supplanted the Sherifian family, which had ruled at Abū 'Arish in the time of his son Muhammad and Muhammad's son 'Ali. The branch of the family most identified with 'Asir is descended from these two, as appears from the following table, which is not necessarily complete or accurate as regards order of birth:—



The numbered members of this branch deserve further notice.

(1) This Muhammad was a notable man in his day. Born in 1876. Studied in Egypt and at Kufra. Organised opposition to the Turks in 'Asir in and after 1904. Made treaties with His Majesty's Government through the Resident at Aden in 1915 and 1917. Came to terms with Ibn Sa'ūd in 1920, when he ceded to him any rights he might have in the country about 'Abhā.

(2) Displaced (3) in 1926, after complicated events. Accepted in that year the suzerainty of Ibn Sa'ūd by a treaty signed at Mecca. Accepted in October 1931 the practical annexation of 'Asir by Ibn Sa'ūd, retaining a simulacrum only of quasi-sovereign rights. Joined in the rebellion against Ibn Sa'ūd in November 1932, and on its collapse in due course took refuge in Yemen. After strenuous efforts to obtain his surrender, Ibn Sa'ūd agreed recently that he should remain in the Yemen under the Imām's supervision, and accorded him a pension. Appears to be a man of weak character, very amenable to influence. Was described some years ago as "monkish."

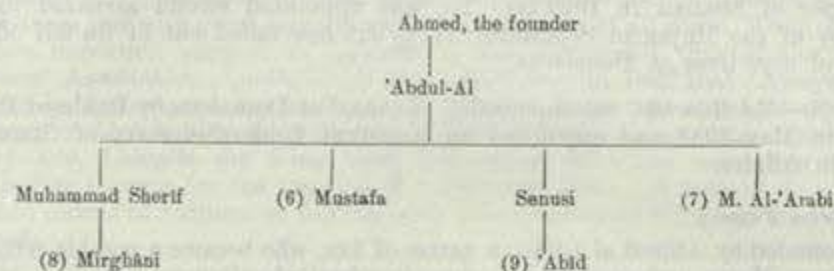
(3) Succeeded his father in 1923. Was upheld by the Masāriha and other tribes in 1924 against an attempt to displace him by his cousin Mustafa. No. (6), who established himself temporarily at Hodeyda, then an Idrisi possession. 'Ali, in turn, lost Hodeyda to the Imām in 1925, and was displaced by (2) in 1926. Returned to Mecca in August 1926, and seems to have lived mostly there until he was suddenly arrested and deported to Riyādh in the summer of 1932, under suspicion, apparently, of intending a *coup* in 'Asir. Recently attempted to escape. Was foiled, but did not die, as was rumoured.

(4) And (5) were very active in organising and conducting the 'Asir revolt of November-December 1932.

The original Ahmed has a numerous posterity through another son, variously called 'Abdul-'Al or 'Abdul-Mutāl. His descendants have been principally associated with Dongola, where his tomb is a place of pilgrimage, and with Egypt.



The following table shows only those of the branch who have come to notice in connexion with Arabia in recent years:—



(6) Was a trusted British agent during the Great War. Later played a rôle in opposition to his cousin 'Ali, No. (3). Died in Egypt in 1930.

(7) One of the 'Asir delegation which came to Mecca in October 1930 to complete the arrangements for the absorption of 'Asir into Ibn Sa'ud's dominions. Concerned in the rebellion of November-December 1932, and left with No. (9) for Massawa after it collapsed.

(8) Has been politically active for many years. Works normally, it is alleged, in the Italian interest, but played an apparently pro-Sa'udi rôle in 1926-27, at the time of and after the establishment of Ibn Sa'ud's suzerainty over 'Asir. Visited Mecca at least three times from September 1926 to September 1927. Was thought perhaps to aspire himself to the post of ruler of 'Asir. Visited His Majesty's agent and consul in Jedda on the 15th September, 1927. Mr. Stonehewer Bird described him at that time as being the King's unofficial adviser in regard to 'Asir and Yemen. He found him a man of intelligence and broad views—pro-Sa'udi, but not pro-Wahhâbi. Accused by the Sa'udi Government in 1932 of again serving Italian interests, and of being concerned in the political plot behind the 'Asir revolt.

(9) Much concerned in the 'Asir revolt of November-December 1932. Was at Jizân at the crucial time, and attempted by a letter and a visit to Kamaran to get His Majesty's Government to recognise what he represented as the restoration of Idrisi rule. Withdrew early in 1933 to Massawa, with his relative M. Al-'Arabi, No. (7).

All members of the family have the title of Seyyid. There is a close connexion between the family and the Senûsis, whose founder was a disciple of the original Ahmed al Idrisi. The spiritual relationship has been reinforced by intermarriage at various times. The Idrisis have also a connexion with the Mirghani family, whose head resides in the Sudan, and is chief of yet another Tariqa, once powerful and still important.

#### 54. *Ismail Ghuznavi.*

Of Amritsar in India. This Indian Wahhâbi has played an important anti-British political rôle in India since 1919. No full account of him would be appropriate in this report, but he deserves mention in it because of his frequent visits of long duration to the Hejaz. Was a delegate of the Indian Ahl-al-Hadith, the Indian equivalent of Wahhâbis, at the Moslem Congress in Mecca in June 1926. Was concerned in the arrangements for creating the Dar-al-Kiswa, or Holy Carpet Factory, in Mecca, and apparently incurred the King's displeasure in connexion with purchases for it in 1929. Now has close relations with Ibn Sa'ud, whom he serves as an unofficial agent in India, principally for purposes connected with the stimulation of the pilgrimage, but also, perhaps, the encouragement of Wahhâbism. Notwithstanding his record in India, he has of late been useful to the Legation in Jedda, having established relations with the Indian vice-consul, to whom he was formerly hostile, and shown readiness to help in adjusting the difficulties of Indian pilgrims. In March 1933 the Indian Government refused his permission to come to the Hejaz, considering that the general danger of his activities must outweigh other considerations. The man is apparently devoted in an anti-British spirit to the cause of Islam, which he identifies with Ibn Sa'ud; but his political activities may also have a Bolshevik aspect.

#### 55. *Jemâl Pasha Ghâzi (Ghazzi).*

A man of about 50. Of Syrian origin, but born at Gaza in Palestine; hence his surname. Graduated in the Turkish Staff College. Said to have been a member of a Turkish Military Mission lent to the Sultan of Morocco in 1910, to have seen service later in Gallipoli and to have been A.D.C. to Enver Pasha, to whom he claims to have been attached up to shortly before the armistice. Went to Basra after the armistice to manage the property of his wife, the daughter of a rich landowner there. Visited India more than once from Basra. Fell out with his wife and applied to Mustafa Kemal Pasha for employment, which was refused, possibly because of his past association with the C.U.P. Entered the service of Ibn Sa'ud and commanded the artillery during the siege of Jedda. Went to 'Asir in 1926 and was reported late in that year to be running Hasan al-Idrisi in company with Ahmed es-Senûsi and Mustafa al-Idrisi. Was reported in 1927 to be an Italian agent, trying to undermine Ibn Sa'ud's position in 'Asir. Re-employed later in the Hejaz. Was serving in the Amir Faysal's household early in 1931 as a sort of chamberlain, and was then scandalously spoken of as M. le Procureur. Accompanied the Turkish Prince Ahmed Tewhid to India, with the permission of Ibn Sa'ud, in May 1931. Travelled a good deal afterwards, posing as Minister of War in the Sa'udi Government. He appeared in Jerusalem in November 1931 and played an ambiguous part in connexion with the then impending Moslem Congress. Whether he eventually attended it or not is not known in Jedda. Returned to India in June 1932 and continued alone the propaganda in favour of the pilgrimage which he and Prince Ahmed Tewhid had initiated in 1931. In a secret report from India of February 1933, he is stated to have expressed in one quarter the intention of enlisting Indian Moslem interest in Ibn Sa'ud's claim to 'Aqaba. Returned to the Hejaz for the 1933 pilgrimage.

Jemâl Pasha is presentable though unpleasantly fulsome. He speaks French, some English and probably other European languages. He is almost certainly a man of loose and untrustworthy character. His recent activities in India give him a certain importance. He is doubtless rewarded for his propaganda in favour of the pilgrimage, but should not be regarded as a responsible agent of Ibn Sa'ud for any other purpose. He is a mere hanger-on.

#### 56. *Khâlid Al-Hakim.*

A Syrian or Palestinian, said to have served as an engineer officer in the Turkish army. Has been mentioned several times since 1926 as an intermediary for the purchase of arms, &c., by Ibn Sa'ud in Europe, acting apparently as a merchant, though he has also been in the King's official employment. His dealings in respect of arms appear to have been with German firms, perhaps with Italy and with Poland, where Ibn Sa'ud placed a very large order in 1930. Reported in August 1927 to have been dismissed, from what post is not clear, but accompanied Dr. Damluji in July 1928 to take part in the still-born conference at Haifa on the Hejaz Railway. Last heard of as being in Haifa in the Sa'udi interest in connexion with the proceedings of the Preparatory Committee of the proposed Arab Congress. Appears to be in with Kâmil al Qassab and other exponents of the idea that Ibn Sa'ud should dominate the congress, even if it is held in Bagdad. Brother of Hasan Bey Al-Hakim, director of the Arab Bank at Jaffa.

#### 57. *Khâlid Al Qarqani.*

A Tripolitan, who is said to have served under the Senûsi, fought the Italians and retired into exile in Egypt, where he has a daughter married to Abdur-Rahmân 'Azzâm Bey, formerly a desert fighter in the Senûsi cause, now a member of the Egyptian Chamber. Al Qarqani was brought to Ibn Sa'ud's notice, it is said, by Sheykh Hâfiz Wahba, and came to the Hejaz in 1930. Was appointed in September 1930 First Assistant to the Viceroy, but apparently soon vacated the post and went into business with the German merchant, afterwards honorary German consul, de Haas. Was re-employed by the Government to accompany the American engineer Twitchell on his tours of survey for water and minerals. Was sent with Hamad Suleymân (*q.v.*) to 'Asir in November 1932 to investigate the dispute between the Idrisi and Ibn Sa'ud's Governor. This mission could not be accomplished by the two delegates, who are still standing by in 'Asir. Khâlid al Qarqani is spoken of as a man of character and an honest one.



58. *Khatib Family.*

Understood to be a Mecca family. Three of them became prominent in 1932 in connexion with the activities of the political organisations behind attempts to undermine Ibn Sa'ūd; viz., the Hizb al Ahrār al Hijāzi and the Jami'at al Dif'a lil Hijaz. Actively connected with the organisation are—

(1) 'Abdul Hamid al Khatib, and

(2) 'Abdul Malik al Khatib—

who appear to be permanently settled in Egypt and to have property there. (2) may possibly be identical with a man of the same name who was described in 1917 as a Javanese of Mecca, well educated, who had been correspondent of the Mokattam and had influence with King Huseyn. A third person, viz.—

(3) *Huseyn Ali al-Khatib*—

lived at Lahej in 1932 and seems to have squandered in riotous living at Aden, &c., money given him by Huseyn ad-Dabbagh for the purposes of the plot against Ibn Sa'ūd.

It is understood that Fuad al Khatib, formerly Foreign Secretary to King Huseyn and now secretary to the Amir 'Abdullah, is not related to this family.

59. *Lami Family.*

A Sheykly family of the Jiblān section of the Mutayr tribe. Concerned in the Nejd rebellion of 1929. Not apparently of great consequence, but worth mentioning, because Jāsir ibn Lāmī was one of the Akhwān leaders who surrendered to the British authorities in Kuwait in January 1930, and was in due course handed over to Ibn Sa'ūd. He has since been a State prisoner at Riyādh, and is one of those who were recently reported to be receiving more lenient treatment than before.

60. *Lāri Family.*

Persian Bahais long settled in Jedda.

(1) *Muhammad 'Ali Lāri*, the head of the family, is a charming old gentleman, now close on 70, probably. Was the principal carpet merchant in Jedda and rich, having an important connexion with Egypt. Health now impaired, but is still in business and highly considered. Has in the past acted as Persian consul, as did his father before him. Reads poetry and likes to commune with nature.

(2) *Ahmed*, son of the preceding, is in the business in Jedda. Was in charge of Persian affairs in his father's absence in 1925, and was reported to have come much under the influence of the then Soviet representative, Hakimov. Urged Ibn Sa'ūd at that time, according to Ibn Sa'ūd himself, to join in a great Eastern Union against the imperialistic Powers, with Persia and Afghanistan in it and Russia supporting.

(1) has two other sons in the business, one in Jedda, one in Egypt. Unless there was a mistake in the name, one of these would appear to have been the "Persian trading consul" mentioned in a Jedda despatch of the 22nd November, 1927, as the would-be buyer of goods which arrived in Jedda in the Russian steamship *Tomp* at that time and were denied clearance from customs after having been landed.

61. *Luwey Family.*

Enjoy the title of Sherif. People of importance in the 'Ateyba tribe, chiefly because of the considerable rôle played by Khālid ibn Mansūr ibn Luwey, who died, apparently of illness, on the march from 'Abhā to Sabya to repress rebellion in 'Asir in December 1932. He had broken with the Hashimites, it was said, owing to a quarrel with the Amir 'Abdullah, who had slapped him on the mouth with a shoe. He had gone over to Ibn Sa'ūd some years before 1924, and was one of the leaders of the forces which occupied Mecca in 1924. Although supposed at a later date to be in sympathy with the extremist Wahhābis in Nejd, he continued faithful to the King and was apt to be called on for military service in times of special emergency. The present head of the family is his eldest son,

(1) *Sa'ad ibn Luwey*, who, immediately on Khālid's death, was appointed to succeed him in his command and as Amir of Khurma.

(2) and (3) *Huseyn* and *Zāmil*.

It was stated at the time of Khālid's death that he had left three minor sons in addition to the above.

62. *Mahmūd Hamdi Hamūde.*

Director-General of Public Health. A Syrian of Damascus, born about 1882. Studied in Beirut and Constantinople. Spent in all sixteen or seventeen years in latter place. Served in Turkish army during and up to end of war, after which he settled in Syria. Held post in some hospital there under the French and was professor of rhino-laryngology at Damascus. Left Syria, apparently for political reasons, and joined Ibn Sa'ūd in Nejd early in or before 1925. Appointed to his present post in January 1926 and represented Ibn Sa'ūd, as King of the Hejaz, at the International Sanitary Conference of 1926. Seemed likely to be eliminated in August 1927 with other Syrians and was said to have resigned but to have been kept on pending an audit of accounts. Evidently weathered this storm. Was Sa'ūdi representative at meeting of International Health Office in autumn of 1932, following on accession of Sa'ūdi Arabia to Rome Convention. Speaks good Turkish and moderate French. Probably has reasonable medical attainments, but gives no impression of real capacity as Director-General of Public Health.

63. *Mahmūd Shalhūb.*

Director of Finance in Jedda. Comes of a Mecca family, one of whom was described in 1917 as controlling the distribution of Zemzem water, a very lucrative job. Mahmūd, who must be over 50, was employed in Turkish times as a Government clerk in Mecca, and was later chief clerk in Huseyn's financial department. Continued to be employed in Mecca under the new régime and was appointed to his present post in 1930. A decent seeming man, but plays no important rôle in a domain in which 'Abdullah Suleymān is supreme. Replaced in his post as Director of Finance in Jedda by his clerk, 'Abdullah Zākīr, in June 1933, and transferred to Mecca as head of the General Accountancy section of the Ministry of Finance.

64. *Mehdi Bey.*

Director-General of Police with headquarters in Mecca. An 'Iraqi, who has, however, lived little in 'Iraq. Said to have been a regimental clerk in the Turkish army, in which a brother of his is still an officer. Was employed also in King Huseyn's army. What little is known about him to the Legation is unfavourable. He appears to be arbitrary and ruthless and to wield considerable authority, not always deferring even to the Viceroy. This account of him is given with reserve.

65. *Ibn Mubārak.*

A man of this name would appear to be Governor at Burayda, but is only known to the Legation from a reference to him in a letter from Ibn Sa'ūd to the Sheykh of Kuwait of the 30th December, 1931. The post is important, as it is the administrative capital of Qasim, not including, however, 'Aneyza, which has its own Governor, probably hereditary, and depends directly on the King.

65a. *Ibn Mubārak.*

Governor of Dhaba. Little known to the Legation, which cannot even trace his first name, but worth mentioning because of the importance of his post in relation to Egypt and Transjordan, and because he was one of the leaders of the forces, with advanced base at Dhaba, employed against Ibn Rifāda in 1932. Is possibly a tribal personage rather than an administrative Governor, and may be of the family of Huseyn ibn Mubārak of the Harb tribe, who was a power at Rabigh at the time of the Arab revolt. Later information. This man, whose first name is 'Abdur-rahmān, was transferred from Dhaba to Wejh in or about June 1933.

66. *Muhammad Khan Ghazi Khan.*

An actively anti-British Indian, who, like Ismail Ghuznavi, cannot appropriately be dealt with at length in this report, but has resided much in Mecca, and has been associated more particularly with the Holy Carpet factory or Dar-ul-Kiswa, a rallying-place for Indian sedition-mongers.



67. *Muhammad ibn Sultān.*

Commander of Ibn Sa'ūd's camelry in the Hejaz. As such, played an important part in the suppression of the Ibn Rifāda rebellion in 1932. Was also a powerful and much-feared element in the machinery set up to Wahhābise public morals in Mecca until its rigours were relaxed.

68. *Muhammad at-Tawīl.*

A native of Jedda of Egyptian origin. Got a small post in the customs in Turkish times and rose to be Director of Customs in Jedda under King Huseyn. Played a leading part in the movement of the Hejazi notables to compel Huseyn's abdication and the accession of King 'Alī in October 1924. Remained in theory Director of Customs only, but wielded great influence under 'Alī, and was described as being "practically dictator" in November 1925, after his triumph in a dispute with Ahmed Saqqāf, the Prime Minister, who decided to leave. Promised at that time to devote to the cause of the Hejaz every penny of "certain economies" which he had effected while Director of Customs. Left the Hejaz on the fall of Jedda, but returned in 1927 or early in 1928 and started a motor transport business. Was said in 1928 to have been president of the Hizb-al-Ahrār al-Hijāzi, but made his peace with Ibn Sa'ūd after an absence at Riyādh, which was described in February 1928 as a deportation. Was slow to receive official employment, and was perhaps considered unsuitable for such employment in the Hejaz, but was in September 1930 placed at the head of a commission to study and reorganise the financial and economic situation in Hasa. Has remained since then in this employment, despite rumours of assassination or flight. Appears to have tightened up regulations and trodden on Qusaibi corns in the process, but not to have made the Hasa customs as paying as he hoped. A capable and well-reputed man, liked by the authorities at Bahrain.

69. *Muhsin al-Firm.*

Principal chieftain of the Eastern Harb tribe in Nejd. Mentioned early in 1929 in connexion with raids alleged to be in preparation against 'Iraq. Does not seem to have joined in the rebellion against Ibn Sa'ūd later that year, and has since been at enmity with the Mutayr owing to his having fallen upon them during the revolt and made off with camels of theirs. Said in 1932 to have refused to lead his tribesmen against Ibn Rifāda, owing to resentment at the holding up of a caravan of his by Ibn Sa'ūd's officials some time before.

70. *Mustafa Badruddin.*

Director of Customs in Jedda. A North African or of North African origin. Probably between 40 and 50. Was given a small post in the Jedda custom-house some years ago, and later became Director of Customs at Yanbu'. Transferred to Jedda in the same capacity in 1930. A man of little ability, but was reported not long ago to be disconcertingly honest. If so, he has not seriously infected the custom-house as a whole with this malady.

71. *Mutlaq as-Sār.*

An important Mutayr leader closely associated with the late Faysal ad-Dawish and one of the sheykhs concerned in the Akhwān rebellion of 1929 who are now living under King Faysal's protection in 'Iraq. Visited Kuwait in December 1932 and February 1933. Appeared to the Political Agent to be in close touch with the Mutayr tribe, and may be watching for an opportunity of promoting or taking advantage of Ibn Sa'ūd's downfall.

72. *Muwaffaq al-Alūsī.*

Omitted, as his connexion with Saudi Arabia seems to have ceased completely. See Personalities report for 1933.

73. *Neshmī.*

Formerly Amir of Jaufr. Said to be a Nejdi; to have been originally a maker of native foot-gear; to have been in Medina while the Hashimites still held it; and to have escaped to the Sa'ūdi side, where his knowledge of the situation in

Medina was so useful that he was given a command. He appears to have been employed at Tebūk and perhaps at Yanbu' in the ensuing years. He became notorious in February 1930 for a large-scale raid into Transjordan similar to that of 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Musā'id (*q.v.*) about the same time. He was apparently at the time already Governor of Jaufr, a post from which the King dismissed him about the end of the year, not, it was explained, because the man was bad, but because the King desired to eliminate causes of quarrel with His Majesty's Government. Reappeared subsequently as Governor of Al-'Ula, but was transferred to an unspecified post in or about June 1933. Is now (May 1934) one of the more important subordinate commanders in the Western Army on the Saudi-Yemen border.

74. *Obeidullah, Maulvi.*

An Indian permanently established in Mecca. Has had a lurid past in India, having been at one time closely connected with the Bolsheviks and been involved in the Silk Letter conspiracy, &c. Was mentioned in March 1927 as a man who was attracting modest notice in Mecca as a lecturer on the traditions of the Prophet, and as belonging to the class of migratory agitators "whose flight is Kabul, Moscow, Berlin and Constantinople." Appears now to carry much weight as a religious teacher and is much frequented by Indians. Probably uses his influence in a definitely anti-British spirit, but has not come to notice latterly as a direct participant in conspiracies in India.

75. *Othmān 'Arab.*

A Hejazi, whose past connexion with the Hejaz is not known to the Legation. Came to notice in 1932 as one of those concerned in the Dabbāgh conspiracy against Ibn Sa'ūd. Was described as a man of 50 to 55, fairly wealthy, normally resident in Egypt, but in the habit in 1931-32 of visiting Jerusalem and holding telephone conversations with the Amir 'Abdullah and Abdur-Rauf Sabbān. Was supposed to be an intermediary between the Hejazi conspirators in Egypt and the Amir. Was certainly concerned in the anti-Sa'ūdi plot and is now excluded from Egypt, Palestine and Transjordan.

76. *Philby, H. St.-J. B., C.I.E., since 1917.*

Born in Ceylon 1885. Educated at Westminster and Trinity, Cambridge. Passed for Indian Civil Service in 1907 and had normal career in India from 1908 to 1915, when he was detached for service in 'Iraq. Sent on mission to Central Arabia in 1917-18, visited Ibn Sa'ūd and crossed Arabia Peninsula from 'Uqayr to Jedda. Employed in Ministry of Interior in 'Iraq in 1920-21 and as British representative in Transjordan from 1921 to 1924, when he fell out with His Majesty's Government and tendered a welcome resignation from that post. Retired on a pension from the Indian Civil Service in 1925, but had already embarked on the recent career which entitles him to a place in this report. Came to Jedda in November 1924, shortly after the accession of King 'Alī, by whose father, Huseyn, he had been decorated in 1923. Was said, in 1924, to believe that republicanism was the nostrum for the Arab world. Was regarded on his arrival in Jedda as having necessarily been sent on a mission by His Majesty's Government, so much so that they officially denied it. Was one of the would-be peacemakers between 'Alī and Ibn Sa'ūd in the last two months of 1924, but was repulsed by Ibn Sa'ūd. Appeared at one moment in 1925 to hover towards the Hashimites, but had long believed in the star of Ibn Sa'ūd, whom he visited near Mecca towards the end of the year and for whom he plumped finally, if indeed he had ever really hesitated, after the fall of Jedda. Has since devoted himself to the King's cause in the press, in his books and in every other way. Resided principally in Jedda until 1930. Was prime mover, though not principal shareholder, in Sharqieh (Limited), whose business he directs in the Hejaz. Embraced Islam in August 1930 and has since spent much time in Mecca, but was away from the Hejaz during most of 1932, when he effected an enterprising journey across the Rub'a-al-Khālī and then spent some months in England.

Mr. Philby has been variously judged and his influence in Arabian affairs variously estimated. He was for some time in and after 1924 a thorn in the side of British authorities and was described in 1925 as clinging tenaciously to his religion, "a simple dualism in which the spirit of darkness is represented



by His Majesty's Government." Need now no longer be regarded as anti-British, except that he would still sympathise with Ibn Sa'ūd in any quarrel with His Majesty's Government, and will still rail on occasion against the British Empire as a system. He would as soon sell British goods as Standard oil or Ford cars and he got Ibn Sa'ūd's wireless contract for Marconi's in 1931. His influence with the King has been exaggerated by some into a legend, while many still believe him to be a British political agent. He has much access to the King and the King values his advice on certain occasions, but he presents no appearance of being in Ibn Sa'ūd's confidence on major political occasions. He is still one of the King's greatest foreign admirers, but in the last two years has conceived doubts of Sa'ūdi administration, especially that part of it for which 'Abdullah Suleymān is responsible and doubts even of the King's capacity to direct his own machine.

#### 77. Qattān Family.

(1) *Yusuf ibn Salim Qattān*, said to have been originally a servant in a coffee-shop in Mecca and afterwards of the original Qattān family whose name he took. Became a guide for Javanese pilgrims. Rose to be president of the Mecca municipality under the Turks, but was still so uneducated that he was said to be unable to tell "the letter Alif from a telegraph pole." Became Minister of Public Works under King Huseyn. Was said in 1930 to be full of schemes connected with the pilgrimage and the advancement of his son No. (2) below. Has also come to notice as one of the agents concerned with the properties of the Sherifian family.

(2) *'Abbās Qattān*, an ambitious young man of 30 odd, who was himself president of the municipality in Mecca in 1930 and still occupies that post. He is the right-hand man of Sheykh 'Abdullah Suleymān, Minister of Finance, and is chief organiser of the hotels recently opened at Mecca, Jedda and Medina.

#### 78. Qusaibi Family.

An important merchant family in the Persian Gulf. The Legation is indebted to the Political Agent in Bahrain for an account of them, which was drawn up in June 1931, and of which the following is a summary:—

Said to be descended from a butcher of Riyādh. Composed of the five brothers mentioned below; children of the same mother by two brothers, Hasan and Ibrahim, who married her successively; partners in business and property; engaged in trade between Bahrain their headquarters, Hasa and Nejd. Accounted, despite their acquisition of wealth, extremely plebeian and disqualified by Arab custom from intermarriage with women of better birth.

(1) *'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Hasan*, simple and wise; the mainstay of the firm; reputed pious; respected by Ibn Sa'ūd.

(2) *Abdur-Rahmān ibn Hasan*, more enlightened and a wonderful fellow for pearl dealing. Possessed of some knowledge of French and English and accustomed to go to Paris on pearl business. Sensible but conceited.

(3) *'Abdullah ibn Hasan*, intelligent and sharp, but of mean and low character and meddlesome. Inclined to be boastful and disliked by Ibn Sa'ūd.

(4) *Hasan ibn Ibrahim*, very foolish and gruff and as low a character as (3). Hot tempered.

(5) *Sa'ad ibn Ibrahim*, permanently resident in Hasa. Not personally known to Captain Prior. Said to be a good "mixer," but similar in character to (3) and (4).

When the above information was supplied in 1931 the Qusaibis had great influence owing to their position as agents of Ibn Sa'ūd in Bahrain and buyers of his requirements for Nejd, as well as to their wealth and their hold on many to whom they had lent money. Their most distinguished debtor was the King himself, who owed them in 1930 something like £80,000, and who, although about half of this had been paid off by June 1931, still owed them the balance. Abdurrahmān was given in the latter year a roving commission to try and raise the wind for the Sa'ūdi Government in Europe, but failed completely. The relations of the Qusaibis with the King no longer seem to be as close as formerly. They resented the reforms introduced by Muhammad at-Tawīl (*q.v.*). They were

driven by bad business to press the King for money. He has of late employed other persons to buy for him, but he is not known to have deprived the Qusaibis of their general agency for him at Bahrain.

#### 79. Rashid Family.

Former rulers of Hail. Little is known of the remnants of this family once so powerful and later so fallen, even before its final collapse, that it was "accounted infamous, even in such a land of violence as Arabia, for its record of domestic murders." It deserves attention, however, because of the possibility of its reappearance on the scene, *e.g.*, if the Shammar tribes from which it sprang should go against Ibn Sa'ūd. It is understood that, after the fall of Hail, the King pursued a policy of absorption, not of annihilation and that many persons belonging to the Beni Rashid, or connected with them, passed into his entourage. Two lads who are being brought up with his younger children and are included in the list of his sons are said to be the children of a Rashid lady, whom Ibn Sa'ūd married after their birth. Their names are—

- (1) *Sultān* and
- (2) *Mish'al*—

the latter of which corresponds with that of an infant child of the last ruling ibn Rashid, as given in the 1917 volume of Personalities in Arabia. Two other persons have come to notice, who are said to be related to the Beni Rashid, viz.—

(3) *Mansūr ibn 'Asaf*, who is said to have been taken into Ibn Sa'ūd's service and to have served for a term as Governor of Tebūk; and his brother—

(4) *Nāsir ibn 'Asaf*, who also served Ibn Sa'ūd, but was reported to have deserted into Transjordan in 1931.

As the information about this family is so meagre, it is worth noting that the following members of it accompanied Ibn Sa'ūd from Riyādh to Jedda in March 1934: Muhammad ibn Talāl, Mash'al ibn Mas'ūd, Rashid al Miheysin, Sultān al Jabr and Fahd al Jabr. At least one Ibn Rashid accompanied the King's son, the Amir Feysal, to the Yemen front in April.

#### 80. Rifāda Family.

Chiefs of the Billi tribe, with an urban establishment at Wejh. The most notable recent member of the family, Suleymān Afnān, played a not inconsiderable rôle during the Great War, but was killed in a raid in 1916 and left two sons, Ibrahim and Ahmed. His brother Salim, who had died earlier, left a son, Hamid. The cousins in this generation were at enmity. Hamid made a bid for the Sheykhship on his uncle's death. He was one of several Hejazi Sheykh who approached the Residency in Cairo in 1924, complaining both of King Huseyn's tyranny and his inability to protect them against the Wahhābis. He came into greater prominence in 1928, when, having returned from Transjordan and taken to brigandage, he attempted a *coup* at Wejh, hoping to dislodge his cousin Ibrahim, who was Governor there and head of the tribe. After a further period of exile he came into still greater prominence in 1932 by invading the Hejaz at the head of a rebel band. He and two, it was said, of his sons were killed, but there may be survivors of this branch. At the outset of the revolt Ibrahim visited the King at the head of a loyal delegation. He is still head of the Billi tribe in the Hejaz, but the Governor of Wejh is now Ibn Mubārak (see No. 65A). The family have *attaches* with a section of the Billi established in Egypt.

#### 81. Rushdi Malhas.

Editor of the *Umm-al-Qura*, the more important of the two weekly newspapers published at Mecca and the unofficial organ of the Sa'ūdi Government. A Palestinian from Nablus, of whom little else is known to the Legation.

#### 82. Rusheyd Pasha.

Consul in Syria, stationed at Damascus. Aged well over 50. A native of Hail, said to be related to the Beni Rashid and to 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Zeyd (*q.v.*). Was semi-official representative of Ibn Rashid in Constantinople before the Great War. Said to have promoted Turkish efforts to curb the rise of Ibn Sa'ūd at that time. Was attached during the Great War to Jemāl Pasha in Syria, and was



employed in Damascus, where he showed bitter hostility to the Hashimites. Retired to Constantinople after the fall of Damascus. Eventually made his peace with Ibn Sa'ūd and returned to Sa'ūdi Arabia. Was selected in 1931 to be the first Sa'ūdi Chargé d'Affaires and consul-general at Bagdad, but has never proceeded, possibly because of difficulties over finance, aggravated by hostility on the part of 'Abdullah Suleymān. Showed signs about the end of 1932 of intending to leave for Bagdad overland, but is still in the Hejaz.

P.S.—Appointed consul at Damascus, instead of Bagdad, in May 1933, and left Jedda for his post on the 24th May.

### 83. *Sadiq (or Siddiq).*

The King's chauffeur. An Indian or of Indian origin. Born in the Bombay Presidency; is about 36 years old; came with Ibn Sa'ūd from Riyādh in 1925; had been in his service since about 1924. He was probably introduced to King by either the Qusaibis or al-Fadhls. Worthy of mention in this strange country, not only because he is said to be the only chauffeur the King will trust, but because he has been concerned in buying transactions, which have carried him at least once as far as London. Quite a clever fellow and said to have amassed some £20,000. Was recently reported to contemplate the creation of a canning industry at Wejāh. Probably holds the speed record for Arabia, as he did the journey by car between Riyādh and Mecca in thirty-one hours a year or two ago, and is said to have reduced this recently to twenty odd. Some feat for a distance of about 600 miles over Arabian "roads."

### 84. *Salih ibn 'Abdul-Wahid.*

Governor of Qāf. Transferred from the Governorship of Al-'Ala to his present post in 1931. A man of no great standing, but of some importance as being the Sa'ūdi Governor nearest to the Transjordan frontier and not a nice neighbour by all accounts. Probably identical with man of the same name whose appointment as Ibn Sa'ūd's representative with the Idrisi was announced in June 1927 and who played an important rôle in the Idrisi's entourage, *e.g.*, at the time of the negotiations regarding the Red Sea Petroleum Company's concession in the Farsan Islands.

### 85. *Salih Ibn Abu Bakr Shata.*

Aged about 45 to 50. Comes of a learned family in Mecca, where he was born. Much employed on committees for Waqfs, grain distribution, &c., under the Hashimite régime. Fled to Jedda after the Sa'ūdi capture of Taif. Was one of the Hejazi notables who compelled the abdication of King Huseyn in October 1924 and rallied in due course to Ibn Sa'ūd. Became one of two assistants to the Amir Faysal in his capacity as Viceroy. Spoken of in 1930 as a possible Minister of Education in a Cabinet then rumoured to be in contemplation, but, if the rumour was true, the project was not pursued. When the Cabinet was eventually organised on its present lines early in 1932 and the Amir Faysal was given the Ministry of the Interior, as well as others, Salih Shata was made his chief assistant in that Ministry and is still the administrative head of it.

### 86. *Sdayri Family.*

Take their name from the district of Sdayr in Nejd. Are related to Ibn Sa'ūd through the fact that his mother was a Sdayri. He has, moreover, taken two wives from the family. Three members of the family have come to notice in recent years, *viz.* :—

(1) *'Abdullah as-Sdayri*, Governor of Tebūk since about the beginning of 1931.

(2) *Turki as-Sdayri*, appointed at the same time Governor of Jauf or Skaka to which the seat of government was transferred shortly before or after. Has just been chosen as Governor-General of 'Asir to reside at 'Abhā and will be succeeded at Skaka by—

(3) *'Abdul-'Aziz as-Sdayri*, Governor designate of Jauf-Skaka.

Little is known of No. (3), but (1) and (2) have been men of might in their setting.

### 87. *Sha'ibi Family.*

Important in Mecca as the Keepership of the Key of the Ka'aba is hereditary in the family. The prerogative is very lucrative because all persons entering the Ka'aba are supposed to make a present to the Keeper according to their means. The family are admittedly descendants of the Quraysh tribe, but not of the Prophet. It is claimed that the pedigree is continuous from pre-Islamic times and that the right to keep the key also dates from that early period. According to one story, there was a blot on the escutcheon in the 19th century, when the male descent failed and the succession passed through a lady of the family who married a slave. The late Keeper's physical appearance suggested that this might be true, but there is no proof of it. Another branch of the family, claiming similar descent, formerly lived in Tunis, but now resides in Mecca. The present Keeper of the Key is—

(1) *Muhammad ash-Sha'ibi*, an elderly man, probably the nephew of the late Keeper, who died in January last and whom this relative was appointed to succeed.

The following two persons, who have come to notice in connexion with the activities of expatriated Hejazis against Ibn Sa'ūd, are not improbably members of one or other branch of this family :—

(2) *M. Huseyn Sha'iba*.—Accompanied Huseyn ad-Dabbāgh (*q.v.*) on his visit to India in 1927.

(3) *Hasan Sha'iba*.—Mentioned in reports from Aden as a Hejazi, who was in 1932 intimate with Huseyn ad-Dabbāgh, and had been a school-master at Terim in Hadhramaut before coming from Mokalla to Aden in March 1932. If of sufficient age, he may possibly be identical with the man of the same name, who was a member for Mecca of the Turkish Parliament for some years, fled from Constantinople to Mecca in 1916, and at first supported but afterwards turned against King Huseyn.

### 88. *Sherifan Family.*

Also called Hashimites by virtue of descent from the great-grandfather of the Prophet, but this name seems to be more particularly affected by the family of King Huseyn. There have been in the past and are in the present numerous families claiming this descent through one or other of the sons of 'Alī, the fourth Caliph and son-in-law of the Prophet. There are in Arabia itself many individuals bearing the title of Sherif, which is held to imply descent from Hasan, the elder son of 'Alī, and whole clans known collectively as Ashraf. The strains most conspicuous in the Hejaz trace this descent through an intermediate common ancestor Hasan ibn Abū Numey, who was Grand Sherif of Mecca in the latter part of the 16th century. Three groups of his descendants are accounted specially important, *viz.* :—

The Dhāwī Zeyd,

The Abadila, a particular branch of whom are the Dhāwī 'Aun, and

The Dhāwī Barakat.

All Grand Sherifs of Mecca in the 17th century were drawn from the rival Dhāwī Zeyd and Dhāwī 'Aun. The last Grand Sherif belonging to the former was 'Abdul-Mutallib, who held the post three times at long intervals. The majority belonged to the Dhāwī 'Aun, of whom came the late King Huseyn and his sons.

Although the most important members of the Sherifan family now live outside Sa'ūdi Arabia, their connexion with the Hejaz is so close as to justify this general notice. The following list, very incomplete, shows those who have come to notice in recent years :—

#### (A) *Dhāwī Zeyd.*

(1) *'Alī Haydar*.—Now elderly. Formerly resided in Constantinople. Worked in with the Young Turks and was at one time Minister of Auqaf. Appointed Grand Sherif to supersede King Huseyn in or about 1917, but was naturally unable to assume the post effectively. Sought early in 1926 for British support in obtaining post of Regent or Governor of Hejaz under Ibn Sa'ūd. Moved later that year to Beirut, where he still resides. Has several sons, the eldest of whom Abdul-Mejid is married to a daughter of his namesake, the



ex-Caliph, and showed signs of political ambition after the Armistice. One of 'Alī Haydar's wives and the mother of two of his younger sons is of British birth. Yet another son studied at St. Andrew's and had the distinction of acting as best man at the marriage of a Scotch divine at St. Giles' Cathedral. Civilised people, important to keep in mind, though of no obvious political importance at present.

(2) *Ja'far*, brother of the above. Also lived in Constantinople. If alive, may be identical with the elderly Sherif 'Alī Ja'far who lived at Lahej in 1932 and was described as a descendant of 'Abdul-Mutallib.

(3) *Sharaf 'Adnān Pasha al Ghālīb as-Zayd*.—Formerly frequented both Constantinople and the Hejaz. Spoken of in 1925 as a possible ruler of the Hejaz, if Ibn Sa'ūd won the war. Elected president of the Moslem Congress at Mecca in June 1926, and was later the vehicle of Ibn Sa'ūd's refusal to hold another owing to attitude of the 'Alī brothers. Represented Ibn Sa'ūd in 1927 at conference at Jizān to deal with the Red Sea Petroleum Company's concession in the Farsan Islands. Described in 1928 as "grizzled and doddering." Still resides in Mecca, but apparently a back number.

(4) *Sharaf Ridha*, usually called Sherif Sharaf *tout court*.—Appointed Acting Minister of Finance under Ibn Sa'ūd in January 1926. Resides in Mecca and is now a member of the Legislative Council.

(5) *Khalid*.—A nephew of the 'Alī Ja'far mentioned at (2). Implicated in the conspiracy against Ibn Sa'ūd in 1932 and was active in and around Aden.

(B) *Dhāwī 'Aun*.

(6) *'Alī ibn 'Abdullah*.—Formerly Grand Sherif. Dismissed by the Turks in 1907. Resides in Egypt. Described in June 1932 as an active supporter of the Hizb-al-Ahrār al Hijāzi.

(7) *'Alī ibn Huseyn*.—Ex-King of the Hejaz. Succeeded King Huseyn on his abdication in October 1924, but was compelled to abandon untenable position in Jeddah in December 1925. Resides mostly at Bagdad.

(8) *Faisal ibn Huseyn*.—King of 'Iraq.

(9) *'Abdullah ibn Huseyn*.—Amir of Transjordan.

(10) *Zayd ibn Huseyn*.—Iraqi Minister at Angora. Had a Turkish mother, a granddaughter of the well-known Grand Vizier Reshid Pasha, and has property interests quite distinct from those of his brothers.

All these, except perhaps (10), have issue. So had King Huseyn's brother Nāsir, now deceased, who left six sons and four daughters.

(C) *Dhāwī Barakat*.

(11) *Sharaf ibn 'Abdul-Muhsin*.—Seems to have served King Huseyn in Egypt, but entered the service of Ibn Sa'ūd and became Amir-al-Arbān, or Director of Tribes. Appointed President of the Inspectorate of Government Departments in 1930. Recently returned to Mecca from Egypt, but his present official status is not known, as the inspectorate is understood to have been abolished.

(D) *Apparently of the Abadila stock though not of the Dhāwī 'Aun*.

(12) *Shākir ibn Zayd ibn Fawwāz*.—Formerly Governor of Taif, a post which seems to have been hereditary in his family. President of the Beduin Control Board in Transjordan and intimately associated with the Amir 'Abdullah, with whom he has thrown in his lot. A tenacious enemy of Ibn Sa'ūd and much less of a play-boy than his master.

(13) *Hamūd ibn Zayd*, brother of the preceding.—Lives quietly at Taif.

(14) *Sharaf ibn Rājih*, a cousin of (12) and (13).—Said to have also been Governor of Taif at one time. Now resides at Bagdad. Identified both in Jerusalem and Bagdad as being the Sherif Sharaf mentioned by Tāhir ad-Dabbāgh in February 1932, in a letter which fell into the hands of the Sa'ūdi Government, as a man who might be enlisted in the conspiracy against Ibn Sa'ūd.

(E) *Even less easy to place, but perhaps of the Abadila*.

(15) *'Alī ibn Ahmad ibn Mansūr*.—A younger member of a family, two of whom were prominent in King Huseyn's time and had great influence in the Harb tribe. This 'Alī has only come to notice as having been one of the persons

arrested at Mecca and deported to Riyādh at the time of the Ibn Rifāda affair in 1932.

(16) *'Alī ibn Huseyn al Harithi*.—One of the Sherifs of Mada'iq, near Taif. Took part in the Arab revolt and is remembered as one of the conquerors of Damascus. Described by Colonel Lawrence as having been at that time an attractive young man, physically splendid and full of courage, resource and energy. Seems to have resettled in the Hejaz, as he was arrested at Mecca and deported to Riyādh at the time of the Ibn Rifāda affair in 1932.

(17) *Muhammad Mohanna*.—One of the Jeddah family, one member of which was Chief of the Controlling Department in 1917, and was then described as a "bottle-nosed bandit," while his brother, still alive, was said to have acquired wealth by smuggling and general robbery. This Muhammad is only interesting because he was arrested at Jeddah and sent to Riyādh at the time of the Ibn Rifāda affair.

(18) and (19) *M. 'Alī and Muhammad al-Bedaywi* (a corruption of Bedawi). Members of a family distantly related to King Huseyn and formerly important in the Juheyra tribe and in the coast towns of the Northern Hejaz. Despite the similarity of name, they would appear to be two distinct, though closely related, persons. Both were mixed up in the Ibn Rifāda affair in 1932. M. 'Alī became an object of attention in Transjordan and was more or less arrested in July to the displeasure of the 'Amir. Muhammad seems to have been in trade at Suez and Dhāba and was concerned in attempts to get supplies by sea to Ibn Rifāda. It was probably he who was reported killed in the defeat of the rebels.

89. *Suleymān Shafiq Pasha Kemāly*.

Omitted, as he seems to have left Saudi Arabia for good. See Personalities report for 1933.

90. *Suwayt Family*.

Leaders in the Dhāfir tribe. Two members of it have figured in recent reports from Kuwait, viz.—

(1) *Ja'dān*, a disgruntled man, hovering between allegiance to King Faisal or to Ibn Sa'ūd and too proud to come to terms with either; and

(2) *'Ajemi*, recognised as chief of the tribe by Ibn Sa'ūd.

91. *M. Taufiq Bey Sherif*.

Syrian ex-officer in Turkish army, of remoter Yemeni origin. At one time secretary to Ahmed as-Senūsi. Later head of the divan of the 'Amir Faysal at Mecca. Figured as an 'Asiri delegate at the Moslem Congress in Mecca in June 1926, and was appointed Secretary-General after an election hotly contested by the 'Alī brothers, who complained that 'Asir was not, in fact, represented and that Ibn Sa'ūd was packing the congress. Went to India later in that month to combat the 'Alī brothers and make propaganda for Ibn Sa'ūd. Floated in and out of the Hejaz in subsequent years and had hopes of great preferment with a mandate to reorganise the administration. Had very variable relations with Ibn Sa'ūd during this period. Finally broke with him so acutely that in June 1931 he decamped secretly in a pilgrim ship bound for India. The Sa'ūdi authorities accused him at that time of being concerned in a plot for circulating forged rupees on a large scale, but did not pursue the charge, which may have been trumped up. He later published violent attacks on the Sa'ūdi Administration. Has since ranged about in India and countries beyond the land frontier. Engages in trade as well as political adventure. Intelligent and active, but volatile; a superior type of adventurer, who might again make his peace with Ibn Sa'ūd and play a rôle in this country. Closely associated in the past with Mahmūd Nedīm, former Turkish Vali of the Yemen, who seems to have gone to earth in Constantinople in his old age, after a long and curious post-war career; and with Ismail Ghuznavi (q.v.). May still be in touch with the latter, despite his breach with Ibn Sa'ūd.

92. *Abu Tuqayqa Family*.

Formerly chiefs of the Tihāma, mainly Hejazi, section of the Huweytāt tribe, with an urban connexion at Dhāba. Rafī'a, their common ancestor, was chief of



the tribe prior to his death in about 1870. One of his many grandsons, Ahmed ibn Muhammad ibn Rafi'a, was chief in 1917. He came to notice in 1924 as one of several Hejazi sheykhs who approached the Residency in Cairo with a complaint of King Huseyn's tyranny and his inability to protect them against the Wahhâbis. He appears to have been Governor of Dhaba in 1927, but in that year the family were apparently in serious trouble with the Government, as it is said that Ahmed and four others were "killed by Ibn Sa'ûd," and others fled to Egypt. Numerous members of the family were concerned in the rebel invasion of the Hejaz by Ibn Rifâda in 1932. Seven of them lost their lives in that adventure and five more were reported by the Sa'ûdi commander to have been slain after Ibn Rifâda's defeat. Among the survivors was, however—

(1) *Muhammad ibn [?] Abdurrahim ibn Alwân ibn Rafi'a*, who was regarded as co-leader with Ibn Rifâda. He escaped, and after many vicissitudes left 'Aqaba for Egypt early in October 1932. May be the person against whom an exclusion order was made in Egypt rather later, but whose name is given as Muhammad bin Ahmed.

Another probable survivor is—

(2) *Mahmûd ibn Ahmed ibn Rafi'a*, who ratted on Ibn Rifâda early in the rebellion and tried to make his peace with Ibn Sa'ûd.

Although the above summary cannot be verified at all points, it is inserted in view of the obvious tenacity of the family hatred of Ibn Sa'ûd, and the survival of (1), who seems to have been an active leader and may crop up again.

#### 93. *Turki ibn Madhi.*

Was in 1932 Inspector-General of 'Asir and was associated with Fahad ibn Zu'ayr in efforts to make Ibn Sa'ûd realise the gravity of the situation preceding the open revolt of the Idrisi at the end of October. Identical with the person mis-named at the time 'Abdullah ibn Turki ibn Mahdi, who, with Abdul-Wahhâb Abu Malha and two chiefs of Asiri tribes, was sent on a mission to the Imâm Yahya in June 1927. Took part in further negotiations with the Imâm early in 1928. Would therefore appear to be one of Ibn Sa'ûd's experts in 'Asir and Yemen affairs, but no further information regarding him is at present available.

#### 94. *Weis, Leopold*, alias *M. Asadullah "Vyce."*

An Austrian convert to Islam. Born at Lemberg in 1900. Record a little obscured by confusion at one time between him and a German aviator of the same name. Appears to have embraced Islam with numerous Germans in or before 1926, under the auspices of Dr. Jabbar Khair, who introduced him to Ibn Sa'ûd. Came to Mecca apparently in 1926, and spent most of his time in the Hejaz, including a long sojourn in Medina, until he left in 1932 for India, intending to go ultimately to China. By profession a journalist. Suspected of Communist *attaches*; so much so that Dr. Jabbar Khair himself came later to the conclusion that his converts were Communists turned Moslem to be able to penetrate Moslem communities. Speaks Arabic and fair English. Married several Arab girls, one of whom is now with him in India, where he is said to be on a lecturing tour.

#### 95. *Yahya an Nasri.*

Principal quarantine doctor at Jedda. A Syrian, like most doctors, now employed by the Sa'ûdi Government. Probably about 40. Studied in Constantinople and Beirut. Previously quarantine doctor at Yanbu'. Pleasant and well regarded by the Legation. Speaks Turkish and French.

#### 96. *Yusuf Yasin.*

Probably born about 1898. A Syrian from Latakia, said by his enemies to be of Yezidi origin. Was at school in Jerusalem in 1917. Joined King Faisal at 'Aqaba and went with him to Damascus. Left on the approach of the French and joined King Huseyn in Mecca. Attached by him to the Amir 'Abdullah at

'Amman, with whom he remained six months. Formed so low an opinion of the 'Amir that according to his own account he broke with Huseyn in consequence. Joined Ibn Sa'ûd in due course. Came to Mecca in 1924-25 and started the *Umm-al-Qura* newspaper. Figured as a Nejdî delegate at the Moslem Congress of June 1926. Remained editor of the *Umm-al-Qura* for some years, but was also official Director of Publicity. Took part in negotiations with Sir G. Clayton in 1925, 1927 and 1928. Acted as Minister for Foreign Affairs in absence of Dr. 'Abdullah Damlûji in 1926 and 1927. Reported in 1928 to have worked to undermine influence both of Damlûji, who resigned that year, and of Hâfiz Wahba (*q.v.*) Employed in various negotiations and again acted at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, for Fuad Hamza early in 1931, and for the 'Amir Faysal and Fuad as well in 1932, but has for some years been principally important as a personal secretary to the King, who made him head of the political section of his diwân in 1930, and whom he always accompanies. Was notorious for his obstructiveness during the Clayton negotiations, and is naturally obstinate and hair-splitting in discussion, but can on occasion be amiable and even conciliatory. Takes his cue, in fact, from the King himself, to whom he appears to be genuinely devoted, and who probably trusts him as much as any of his near advisers except 'Abdullah Suleymân. Is probably a more convinced Wahhâbi than most of the King's alien entourage and is also a strong Arab nationalist, with fewer ulterior motives than Fuad Hamza, having a simpler character and less European knowledge. Has the eyes of a fanatic. Works very hard. Though a very useful factotum to the King, is rather a butt in high circles. A facile and sometimes intemperate writer, still responsible for contributions to the *Umm-al-Qura*. Speaks only Arabic well, but can manage a little English.

#### 97. *Zawâwî Family.*

A Mecca family, worth mentioning because one of them, viz., *Yusuf 'Alî az-Zawâwî* appears to have been concerned at Cairo in 1932 in plots against Ibn Sa'ûd; and because this or another Zawâwî may have been in reality the person who went to France in the summer to buy arms for the conspirators. The man who went to buy the arms was first described as being Muhammad Pasha az-Zawî [*sic*], and was afterwards identified at Aden as being Hamîd Pasha al-Wâdî, then head of the Amir 'Abdullah's diwân. It is difficult to reconcile this with what is known of Hamîd Pasha al-Wâdî's movements about that time. Anyhow, whoever went to buy the arms, whether Zâwî, Zawâwî or Wâdî, was associated with another person 'Abdul-Qâdir Hamad ba-Hamîd, and the names may have got mixed up.

#### 98. *'Abdul-Latif 'Abdul-Jalil.*

Comes from Kuwait, where he held the post of Director of Customs, and was given the Indian title of Khan Bahadur. In 1930 or 1931, however, he vacated his post under a cloud. Has since moved about a good deal in Middle Eastern countries, including Sa'ûdi Arabia, and has attracted attention in Bagdad, Tehran and elsewhere by representing himself as empowered by Ibn Sa'ûd to engage in purchases and to promote various schemes, *e.g.*, an overland pilgrim route to Mecca, oil concessions, &c. May have some general authority from Ibn Sa'ûd for his activities, and is therefore worth mentioning, but he is not known in Sa'ûdi Arabia itself as a man of real influence or importance.

#### 99. *Hamad ibn Shuway'ir.*

Little is known of this man except that he appears to have played a rôle for some time in connexion with 'Asir and is now (May 1934) Governor of Tihâmat 'Asir. In this capacity he has taken an important part in the present military operations in the coastal region of the Yemen.

#### 100. *Muhammad Surûr as-Sabbân.*

Administrator of the Finance Department. Son of a slave of the Sabbân family and became the moving spirit in their hide and skin business, which was at one time important, but became latterly bankrupt. Was a clerk in the municipality under King Huseyn, and is said to have tried to assassinate Ibn



Sa'ud when conquered the Hejaz in 1925, and to have been subsequently incarcerated at Riyadh. Returned to the Hejaz about 1929 and was taken up by the Minister of Finance, whose powerful influence got him appointed about two years ago to his present post. Is nowadays second only to him in the Ministry of Finance in practical importance, and during the latter's present (May 1934) absence at Hudeyda is in effective control of it. Manager of the recently-formed Arabian Export Company, a corporation formed to promote the export trade of the country. Pleasant, generous, and said to be most capable.

[E 3851/2429/25]

No. 91.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received June 9.)*

(No. 138.)

(Telegraphic.)

Jedda, June 9, 1934.

CORRESPONDENCE ending with your telegrams Nos. 50 and 85.

Fuad engaged me in long conversations on 5th and 6th June regarding general relations between Ibn Saud and His Majesty's Government. While admitting that the former had no ground for complaint, he attributed recent compromise with the Imam to the ambiguity of His Majesty's Government's attitude. I contested this on obvious lines.

Fuad said that the King felt that the time had come to take stock of his relations with His Majesty's Government, and sounded me as to the possibility of their consenting to a general discussion in preparation for which the King might like to see me himself. I admitted several major questions had assumed or were assuming importance, but I reminded him of constant preference of His Majesty's Government for dealing with all such questions on their individual merits and expressed doubt as to whether you would see what material there was for a general discussion.

Fuad said that events in the neighbouring countries made Ibn Saud anxious to consider his position. He spoke of veiled Turkish and Persian hostility to the Arabs and the menace which it constituted to Iraq. He also spoke vaguely, but suspiciously, of the attitude of the King of Iraq. I said that settlement with the Yemen gave promise of stability in that direction, and fears of Turkish and Persian aggression in Arabia rested on no solid foundations that I could see.

On my pressing him as to what he was at, Fuad said that the King sought the opinion of His Majesty's Government as to whether the time was ripe for a rapprochement with Saudi Arabia with a view to establishment of closer relations and co-ordination of general policy. If so, might not conversations be undertaken with a view to an understanding, whether oral, written or in form of an alliance? I promised to convey this to His Majesty's Government, but again expressed personal view that they would prefer to deal with definitely outstanding questions individually, and would be averse from discussion of the more hypothetical contingencies to which he had referred. Early in the conversation Fuad spoke of the possibility of his visiting London this autumn. My reaction was friendly, but guarded, whereupon he begged me to divorce question of his visiting London from that raised by the King.

General impressions I derived were that, for reasons indicated in correspondence, the King has got into one of his recurring states of suspicious anxiety; that he has authorised Fuad to attempt to promote general understanding of some sort with His Majesty's Government, to whom he holds out hope of meeting their wishes on all points in return for their support; and that Fuad is making the most of his instructions, partly perhaps to re-establish his own credit with the King, which may be somewhat shaken, although Ibn Saud recognises his utility.

The position resembles that of June 1931, when the King and Fuad made similar approach, although the setting is different and even more nebulous and the King is more in the background, so far. What reply should I give? In particular, would you be prepared to give Fuad a hearing if he went to London? In my opinion, visit to England could produce no more result than that of the Saudi mission in 1932, and it would doubtless be in many ways inconvenient. On

the other hand, Fuad intends to go to Europe for reasons of health, in any case, and could hardly be prevented from going to London privately. A show of welcome and readiness to talk things over informally might soothe Ibn Saud and allay somewhat his suspicions of British policy.

(Repeated to Bagdad and Angora.)

[E 3831/722/25]

No. 92

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received June 11.)*

(No. 152.)

Sir,

Jedda, May 20, 1934.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 149 of the 15th May, I have the honour to submit a fuller report on my conversation with Fuad Bey Hamza on the 30th April regarding slavery. I would ask that it should be read in conjunction with my despatch No. 123 of the 23rd April, in which I discussed certain aspects of the question. I will refer to the enclosure in my despatch under reference as Mr. Furlonge's memorandum.

2. I have already reported the general nature of the exchange of views with Fuad Bey regarding the future of the Treaty of Jedda, of which our conversation on slavery formed part. Fuad Bey's line was that the Saudi Government did not wish to denounce the treaty, but hoped that His Majesty's Government would meet them in regard to slavery. He intimated that Ibn Saud might now find it possible to promulgate regulations which would prove their desire to discountenance the slave trade and to deal in them with such points as the following:—

- (a) Prohibition of importation of slaves.
- (b) Registration of sales.
- (c) Manumission by the local authorities in special circumstances, e.g., where a slave complained of ill-treatment.

3. It is clear that the idea of the Saudi Government is to offer the promulgation of such a regulation as a *quid pro quo* for the renunciation by His Majesty's Government of the right of manumission preserved provisionally by letters (3) and (4) annexed to the Treaty of Jedda. They would also like to get rid of article 7 of the treaty, but Fuad Bey did not press this point on the 30th April. He had doubtless in mind my constant insistence on the fact that, whatever may be thought of the right of manumission, article 7 does not in any way detract from Ibn Saud's position as an independent ruler, and he preferred now to suggest that, if manumission went, article 7 would take on a different meaning, less repugnant to Saudi ideas.

4. It is obvious that, if His Majesty's Government agreed to discuss the matter on Fuad Bey's basis, they would have to know more about the proposed legislation. I did not press Fuad Bey to define more clearly what was contemplated in this respect, lest I should appear too encouraging. My line was that His Majesty's Government could not possibly give up article 7 of the treaty, but might consider the manumission question, though I made it clear they would be very reluctant to abandon their present rights.

5. Fuad Bey's representations make it necessary for His Majesty's Government to take a definite decision as to their future attitude. As I stated in paragraph 10 of my despatch No. 123 of the 23rd April, it cannot be doubted that the exercise of the right of manumission does detract from Ibn Saud's position as a Sovereign. The question arises whether the promulgation of the suggested regulations would justify His Majesty's Government in removing his grievance, subject to the provisos indicated in paragraph 11 of my despatch No. 123 of the 23rd April. The situation which I foreshadowed in that paragraph has arisen even sooner than I anticipated.

6. The utility of the manumission system is discussed in paragraph 75 ff. of Mr. Furlonge's memorandum. I agree with his conclusions, though I doubt whether, even in Jedda and the neighbourhood, the knowledge that slaves can secure freedom by taking refuge in this Legation creates any widespread sense of insecurity in the minds of the owners. I am not denying that the system does good on a small scale by producing a limited sense of insecurity, or that it does direct good to slaves in a small number of individual cases, but I doubt whether



this number bears any large proportion to the already small total number of slaves manumitted annually by the Legation.

7. You are familiar with the difficulties which the exercise of the right of manumission creates for the Legation itself. It may, however, be useful to sum them up connectedly:—

- (a) Manumission by the Legation is valueless unless it is backed by a local manumission, as happens in a very small number of cases, or unless the slave is sent out of the country, as happens in the majority. We call this process "repatriation," but it is repatriation only in the sense that the ex-slaves are put on their way to the country to which they belong by origin. They are, in fact, sent from a country which they know to a country with which they have normally lost any real connexion. If they go to the Sudan, they have a fair chance of making good in new surroundings, though very little of re-entering an original family life. If they go to Abyssinia, we and they trust to luck, once the authorities at Addis Ababa have disposed of them.
- (b) The arrangements for repatriation work more smoothly now than they did three years ago. The Sudan Government continues to be very helpful in regard to ex-slaves having any legitimate claim on them. The arrangements made by the Legation at Addis Ababa have worked well, except in the one respect that the Legation Charity Fund is still saddled with expenditure in connexion with slaves whose enslavement cannot be shown to date from later than the 31st March, 1924. The Saudi authorities have shown less inclination to be obstructive in normal cases than they were. It must, nevertheless, be borne in mind that we are a good deal at their mercy. We can claim under the letters annexed to the Treaty of Jedda that liberation and repatriation go together, but, as Mr. Furlonge points out in paragraph 98 of his memorandum, ex-slaves cannot be embarked without the completion in each individual case of formalities, for the non-performance of which the Saudi authorities, if in a less accommodating mood than they have been of late, might easily find pretexts.
- (c) My discussions with Sheikh Yusuf Yasin in connexion with the Khayrullah case suggests a particular difficulty which might arise if the Saudi Government objected to the "repatriation" of slaves born in this country. The number of such slaves out of the total number of 209 shown in Appendix I to Mr. Furlonge's memorandum is estimated at eighteen. The difficulty in this case is, however, only a potential one and need not be taken seriously at present.
- (d) The subject of Royal slaves is dealt with fully in paragraphs 55 to 57 of Mr. Furlonge's memorandum. I need add nothing, except that, even if His Majesty's Government should make a concession in respect of slaves who are the personal servants or soldiers of the King, as I have recommended, the manumission of any slaves whatsoever connected with the Royal family will continue to be a subject of special soreness.
- (e) There are certain possibilities of abuse connected with the slave's right to such asylum. When, as sometimes happens, the owner accuses the slave of having robbed him, it cannot be assured that it is always a false accusation, of which the authorities take advantage to obstruct repatriation. There is also a chance of free persons pretending to be slaves in order to leave the country under the auspices of the Legation. Such cases are very rare, but on one occasion last year two girls, who were in due course proved to be free members of a local family, caused no little trouble. I am at present investigating a much more difficult and doubtful case, in which the local authorities assert that a man and his wife are freeborn, while they themselves claim to be slaves.
- (f) The cost of "repatriating" slaves falls on the charity fund of the Legation in all cases, except the few in which it is recoverable from the Government of Ethiopia. His Majesty's Government, strongly as they pursue the moral ideal of fighting slavery, have felt unable for some time past to meet this expenditure from public funds. I am addressing you separately on this subject, but I mention it here as a very unfortunate factor in the present situation.

8. None of the difficulties which arise under the above heads are so serious as to justify a renunciation of the right to manumit slaves, except those which already give rise or may give rise in future to controversy with the Saudi Government. It is the danger of such controversy and the disadvantage of leaving them under a permanent sense of grievance that incline me in favour of a settlement on the basis which they now suggest.

9. His Majesty's Government may be tempted to suggest that the Saudi Government should be asked to promulgate their regulations and to consent to the continued exercise of the right of manumission until the regulations have proved effective. I fear that this would not meet the case. They would feel that they were being asked to do something substantial in return for a vague promise similar to that in letter No. (3) annexed to the Treaty of Jedda. I feel that the time has come either to pursue the matter with them on the basis of an acceptance in principle of their present proposal or to say roundly that His Majesty's Government are not prepared to waive their right of manumission at the present time on any consideration whatsoever.

10. It is not altogether irrelevant to this subject to consider the position of His Majesty's Government as regards other parts of Arabia. In their recent settlement with the Yemen they have been satisfied with an exchange of letters producing much the same effect as article 7 of the Treaty of Jedda. It cannot be supposed that, if they appoint a representative at Sana or a consul at Hudeyda, they would claim the right of manumission, although the Yemen is no less than this country a succession State of the Ottoman Empire, in which the right was originally established. I am not clear as to what happens in the Aden Protectorate, where His Majesty's Government might be expected to exercise a more or less direct control, but I recently heard that the Sultan of Mokalla maintains several hundred slaves. It is satisfactory to note in the Persian Gulf Administration reports for the years 1928 to 1930 that a fair number of slaves are manumitted by the British authorities in the trucial sheikdoms and Bahrein. I gather, however, that the right of manumission does not exist in Koweit. Putting such meagre information as I possess together, I am not clear that His Majesty's Government could meet at every point the reproach that they were being a little harder on Ibn Saud than on some other Arabian potentates. This would, again, be no sound reason for abandoning rights in his country, but it may weigh in the scale when it is a question of using the waive to induce him to take a forward step of some value.

11. I shall be grateful for early instructions as to how I should proceed in any further discussion with Fuad Bey.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

[E 3864/79/25]

No. 93.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received June 11.)*

(No. 140.)

(Telegraphic.)

*Jedda, June 11, 1934.*

MY telegram No. 137.

It is officially announced to-day that Abdul Wahhad has been sent to Sanaa, whence he will be sent to Muhabisha for surrender, and that evacuation of mountain area by Yemenis has been completed.

Yemeni delegates are awaiting steamer expected to leave for Hodeida in next two or three days.

(Repeated to senior naval officer, Red Sea sloops, No. 26, for self and Resident at Aden.)



*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received June 18.)*

(No. 163.)

Sir,

*Jedda, May 29, 1934.*

SINCE I wrote my despatch No. 145 of the 14th May, which dealt exclusively with the Saudi Green Book issued on the 29th April, I have not had occasion to address you any general despatch on the situation between this country and the Yemen. It may be convenient if I now give a summary account of certain matters not already dealt with fully by telegraph.

2. Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the situation during the three weeks preceding the 13th May, more remarkable even than the Yemeni evacuation and Saudi occupation of Hodeida, was the absence of any trustworthy news of the Amir Saud's operations in the interior since the expulsion of the Yemeni forces from Najran on the 21st April. I observed to Fuad Bey on the morning of the 13th May that the silence was becoming sinister and could only give rise to rumours that the Amir had suffered a reverse or was having a very difficult time this side of Saada. It was then that Fuad informed me that the King had ordered a suspension of hostilities in consideration of undertakings by the Imam to surrender the Idrisis within three days and to evacuate the Beni Malik-Faifa area within five. He vouchsafed no information, however, about the Amir Saud, and the communiqué which appeared the same day merely said this: Following on the Imam Yahya's undertakings to hand over the Idrisis, to evacuate the mountains and to release the hostages taken therein, His Majesty the King had issued orders to his troops to remain in their positions and to cease fighting on all fronts, in order that the peace negotiations may be initiated."

3. To finish with the Amir Saud, it need only be added that the same silence has prevailed since the 13th May. Two days ago it was said that the Saudi Government themselves had had no news of him for nine days. Be this as it may, the public have been left without official information, and rumour has filled the void with tales, mostly of woe.

4. Hardly less profound was the silence in regard to the peace negotiations at Taif during the twelve days beginning on the 13th April. It soon became evident that the Imam had not fulfilled Ibn Saud's conditions within the time limits indicated above. Nevertheless, the negotiations proceeded, as was shown by the optimistic communiqué of the 18th May, which I summarised in a telegram of that date and a copy of which I now enclose.

5. On the 25th May Sheikh Yusuf Yasin came to see me, Fuad Bey having been ill in Taif. My telegrams will have given you the gist of our conversations that morning and evening, but they were of such importance that I thought it well make fuller records of them. These also I enclose. I may observe that Sheikh Yusuf seems to have informed a good many people, besides myself, of the King's intention to resume hostilities if the three conditions were not fulfilled by a fixed date. The news published in the *Umm-al-Qura* on the morning of the 25th May was vague, but on the 27th May it was generally known in Jedda that a period had been fixed for fulfilment and that it was to expire to-day.

6. Shortly after Sheikh Yusuf left me on the evening of the 25th May I received the report of the commander of H.M.S. *Penzance* on the situation at Hodeida. I discussed this with Sheikh Yusuf the following afternoon on the lines indicated in my telegram No. 130 of to-day. I had intended to include an account of this further conversation in this despatch, but, as Fuad Bey's letter of yesterday has made it necessary to telegraph on the whole subject, I need not deal with it further here.

7. Fairly accurate reports of the position at Hodeida have been circulated by the gossips in Jedda and Mecca, and have, I understand, caused some excitement and misgiving. They have helped to restimulate the belief entertained in many quarters that the Imam's whole game has been, and is, to wear down Ibn Saud by procrastination and to lure his forces into untenable positions.

8. I find it difficult to understand why Ibn Saud was so ready to suspend hostilities on or just before the 13th May and to be content with demands so much more moderate than were expected, even after the Imam had given further proof of his unreadiness to comply with the King's conditions. I find it still

more difficult to understand why he has chosen the present moment, not, indeed, to increase his demands, but to renew them under threat of an immediate resumption of hostilities.

9. The key to the mystery of the Amir Saud may be also the key to these enigmas. It is possible that Ibn Saud's pride precludes him from abating his demands, while his sense of eventual danger and his need for playing up to the Arab world have prevented him from increasing them by claiming an indemnity or by trying to hold on to Hodeida. He may, however, have been considerably influenced during the most recent phase by his fears of foreign intervention, once his easy conquest of the Yemen littoral brought major changes in the political geography of Arabia within the region of possibility. Having got to Hodeida, he had to reckon with his suspicions of Italy, his uncertainty as regards the ultimate attitude of His Majesty's Government, and perhaps some doubt as to whether France, outwardly so little interested, might not take a hand in the game.

10. I am not in a position to judge whether the French Government are now disposed to concern themselves with South-Western Arabia. I have dealt so fully by telegraph with the King's fears of Italy and his anxiety for reassurance as to the attitude of His Majesty's Government that I need add little in this despatch. I may say, however, that when I last saw Sheikh Yusuf Yasin on the 26th May he seemed to be pleased with his conversation with my Italian colleague, whose attitude he in fact described as pro-Saudi, and I am glad to learn from M. Persico that Sheikh Yusuf followed my advice and spoke much more frankly to him on the 26th May than he had done on the previous day. These facts are all to the good, though I do not attach exaggerated importance to M. Persico's personal attitude, which is that of a newcomer and a man obviously inclined to pleasantness in intercourse.

11. This despatch is intended to serve as a clue to a maze, and I prefer not to overload it with details. I will end by mentioning three disconnected facts of some interest. The first is that, when the Minister of Finance went to Hodeida, he took with him as medical officer an Indian doctor, who has in past served as a temporary assistant surgeon in the Government of India dispensaries in the Hejaz. The second is that the *Umm-al-Qura* newspapers of the 11th May referred briefly to your statement in the House regarding the neutral attitude of His Majesty's Government. The third is that the Minister of Finance is said to have asked that a ship bought by the Arabian Steam Navigation Company recently organised here under Government auspices, which left on the 23rd May for Qunfidha and Jizan, should go on to Hodeida. The pessimists are already suggesting that the Amir Feisal wants to ensure a retreat by sea, if he should be cut off.

12. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome and His Majesty's Chief Commissioner at Aden.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

Enclosure 1 in No. 94.

*Record of Conversations between Sir Andrew Ryan and Sheikh Yusuf Yasin on May 25, 1934.*

(1)

SHEIKH YUSUF YASIN called this evening. I expressed the hope that he had brought me some news, as I had had none since 13th May. In the meantime one danger, which I had anticipated in conversation with Fuad Bey as a possible result of prolonged silence, had materialised, i.e., the press abroad had announced an alleged defeat of the heir apparent's forces. Sheikh Yusuf said that Fuad Bey was to have produced a statement for publication but fell ill (he has been unwell for some days, hence the substitution of Sheikh Yusuf on the present occasion). Sheikh Yusuf himself then took the job on, but abandoned it, as the press reports were so contradictory that they cancelled out. One paper had in the same issue accounts of the heir apparent's defeat near Saada and of his



entry into Sana. The facts were that there had been no fighting since the King ordered the suspension of hostilities. Even before that the Amir Saud had encountered no important Yemeni forces anywhere except in Najran. Elsewhere he had met Yemenis only in small parties of 200 or 300. The Amir Feisal had not had to engage Yemeni forces at all. (This doubtless meant after the fall of Medi.)

Sheikh Yusuf went on to describe the political situation under instructions from the King. He made the usual references to Ibn Saud's special relations with His Majesty's Government and to the reasons why the King had reluctantly gone to war to defend his rights. The King had no ambitions and the feeling of his people was against war. Now that the known results had been achieved there was a divergence between him and his people. His views might also be affected by world opinion. The negotiations with the Imam had proceeded, but owing to the divergence between the King's views and those of his people they had been kept secret. A treaty had actually been drawn up and signed by the Amir Khalid and Abdullah-al-Wazir. It remained for the Imam to fulfil certain conditions. Parts of the treaty would be kept secret for the present, but Sheikh Yusuf had the King's instructions to communicate the gist of it to me. He proceeded to do so in rather general language as follows:—

Article 1 provided for the restoration of peace. The most important articles dealt with frontiers. It had been agreed to have these as they are, except as regards Najran. Najran and the Yam were to be definitely Saudi. There was to be an amnesty for all persons in any territory annexed to Saudi Arabia. It was provided that the parties should not resort to war for the settlement of disputes, but should refer them to arbitration. Other articles dealt with the subjects of the parties and their rights and with postal and telegraphic arrangements. The Arwa settlement was abrogated, but the new treaty reproduced its stipulations regarding criminals. There were a protocol on arbitration and certain annexed letters, the most important of which dealt with the conditions to be fulfilled by the Imam before the treaty could take effect, viz.—

- (a) Surrender of the Idrisis;
- (b) Release of hostages;
- (c) Evacuation of the mountain area.

Sheikh Yusuf emphasised the moderation shown by the King. Nevertheless, he went on, His Majesty was still suspicious of the Imam's intentions. His doubts had been intensified during the last few days. He had notified the Amirs Saud and Feisal that if his conditions were not complied with by yesterday, 24th May, there could be no peace. He had, at the instance of the mediation mission, extended the time to the 15th Safar, i.e., next Tuesday, 29th May. The King's doubts were due to the contradiction between the Imam's fair words and facts which did not bear them out. He was reported to be reinforcing in the mountains. It was also said that there were conflicting currents in the Yemen and that, while the Imam wanted peace, his eldest son wanted war and was in touch with a foreign Power, Italy, which was encouraging him to resist.

I asked Sheikh Yusuf whether there were any conditions other than those he had mentioned. Fuad Bey had spoken of "guarantees" and had indicated three possible heads, rectification of frontiers, guarantees for Yemeni tribes friendly to Ibn Saud and indemnity. There was a report in Egypt that the King wished to occupy certain Yemeni territory for five years. Sheikh Yusuf said nothing about Fuad's first heading, and I did not pursue it, as the treaty seemed to dispose of the frontier question on the lines already described. Sheikh Yusuf said that the safeguards for the tribes were provided for in the treaty. The King had overruled suggestions that he should ask for an indemnity or hold on to Yemeni territory, though his advisers had favoured some such demands. It was his moderation which caused the divergence of views of which Sheikh Yusuf had spoken. Many thought that once he had the Imam by the throat, after the Imam had compelled him to go to war, he should demand more.

I thanked Sheikh Yusuf for his statement. I said that the end was less reassuring than the beginning. What it came to was that unless the Imam complied with the King's demands by 29th May, the war would be resumed. Sheikh Yusuf acquiesced and said he had forgotten one thing, viz., that the King had made all his arrangements during the last few days and had not only warned the two Amirs to be ready but had himself held a review of the forces at Taif.

Abdullah-al-Wazir had been present and had been told that it was the Imam's fault that these preparations were necessary.

I said that the addition was even less reassuring. I went on to say that I should like to know the nature of the communication he had made to me. It was true that Ibn Saud was on special terms with His Majesty's Government, though the latter were neutral in this war. His Majesty's Government were themselves, however, on special terms with the Italian Government and had an understanding with them to exchange information and views, with the object of helping to preserve peace. Italy, I added, had given assurances of neutrality to the Saudi Government.

Sheikh Yusuf said he was to speak to the Italian representative and asked my advice as to the line he should take. It was true that the Italian Government had given assurances of neutrality, but there was reason for anxiety in view of press reports regarding their relations with Seyf-al-Islam Ahmed, of the Imam's stubborn attitude, of the retention of the Italian "cruisers" at Hodeida, and of the insistence of the Italians on having an agent there. At this point he begged me to postpone the rest of the conversation, as he did not want to be late for Friday prayers. We agreed to meet again in the evening.

A. R.

May 25, 1934.

(2)

Sheikh Yusuf Yasin and I resumed last evening the conversation recorded in my minute of yesterday. I had already drafted my telegram No. 124 recording the main points of the first conversation, except in so far as they related to the Italian attitude.

On my asking Sheikh Yusuf to continue, he said that he looked for an expression of my views on what he had said about Italy. I said that he had mentioned four grounds for misgiving. I suggested that it was a mistake to attach undue importance to allegations in the press regarding relations between the Italians and Seyf-al-Islam Ahmed. As for the Imam's stubbornness, the Imam was notoriously so obstinate with everybody that it was hardly necessary to attribute his obstinacy to foreign inspiration. As regards the Italian ships at Hodeida, which were not cruisers, it must be recognised that anybody having interests in that part of the world must have an eye on Hodeida. His Majesty's Government had been the first to send ships. The Italians had sent ships, and the French had sent a ship. The latest news from Hodeida was not altogether reassuring. What were His Majesty's Government doing? They were again sending *Penzance*. I know little, I said, about the question of the Italian agent, but I had understood from Fuad Bey that the Saudi Government had no objection to the presence of such a person, provided he did not seek official recognition.

The really important thing, I said, was that the Italian Government had given definite assurances of neutrality. I had told Fuad Bey that, in my opinion, these assurances had great value. I had reported all that had passed between Fuad Bey and myself to His Majesty's Government. I found that they took the same view. They had told me to say that it would be most difficult for them to engage in discussion based on the assumption that the Italian assurances could not be relied on, especially as these assurances were in conformity with the Anglo-Italian understanding of 1927. I reverted to the question I had put to Sheikh Yusuf in the morning as to the nature of the communication he had made to me, and pointed out again the embarrassment which it might cause to His Majesty's Government to have to conceal what they know from the Italians. My question was now less important than it had been, as I had since seen a good deal of what he had told me in the morning paper, though in a less precise form. All the same, I was of the opinion that the more forcibly the Saudi Government themselves spoke to my Italian colleague the better. Sheikh Yusuf said that he had seen M. Persico since our conversation in the morning, and was to see him again to-day. I gathered that he intended to speak to him on much the same lines as he had spoken to me, but less precisely. I said that the lines he indicated seemed to me to be sound. He seemed pleased with the personal attitude of M. Persico, who, indeed, seemed to be on the side of the Saudi Government.



After some more desultory conversation on this topic, I asked Sheikh Yusuf to explain three points, on which his language in the morning had left me doubtful, and I elicited the following:—

- (a) The reason for keeping the full provisions of the new treaty with the Imam secret was that the Saudi Government hesitated to disclose the fact that they had agreed to abandon the territory which the Amir Feisal had occupied. In any case, the treaty would have to remain secret until the Imam had complied with the King's preliminary conditions.
- (b) The frontier established by the treaty was to be, as I supposed, that which had existed *de facto* before the outbreak of war. I observed that my great hope was that the frontier would be as clear and definite as possible, and that the parties would get away from the imprecisions of the past. Sheikh Yusuf said that the Saudi Government were fully alive to the importance of this.
- (c) Sheikh Yusuf explained that, when he had spoken of the alongation of the Arwa settlement, he was referring to the treaty which had been signed at the time. In form it was an unsatisfactory document, so it had been set aside completely, to be superseded by the new treaty.

A. R.

May 26, 1934.

Enclosure 2 in No. 94.

*Extract from the Mecca Umm-al-Qura of May 18, 1934.*

*Official Communiqué No. 6.*

THE delegation of the Government of His Majesty the King has commenced peace negotiations with the delegation of His Highness the Imam Yahya in an atmosphere full of optimism. The Arab delegation has prepared full proposals for the treaty of peace and the particulars relating to it with a view to stabilising the relations between the two countries. Negotiations are obviously progressing and are expected to be finished in the near future.

[E 4050/79/25] No. 95.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received June 19.)*

(No. 146.)  
(Telegraphic.)

Jedda, June 19, 1934.

MY telegram No. 141.

Saudi Government inform me that Imam has approved peace treaty and signed instrument of ratification. Ratification will be exchanged shortly at Hodeida, and treaty will be published immediately afterwards.

Please inform Admiralty.

(Repeated to senior naval officer, Red Sea sloops, No. 29, for himself and Resident, Aden.)

[E 3851/2429/25] No. 96.

*Sir John Simon to Sir A. Ryan (Jedda).*

(No. 118.)  
(Telegraphic.)

*Foreign Office, June 19, 1934.*

YOUR telegram No. 138 of 9th June: Ibn Saud's relations with His Majesty's Government.

I agree regretfully that there is not much satisfaction which His Majesty's Government can give to Ibn Saud, and the idea of an alliance could not be entertained. On the other hand, in view of our past relations and his general wish to look to us for advice, I have no desire to appear unsympathetic, but in saying this we must be careful not to raise false hopes.

You are authorised to explain to Fuad Hamza—if this appears to you appropriate—that you will shortly be coming on leave of absence, and if Ibn Saud desires personally to amplify Fuad's conversation with you, you would welcome the opportunity of hearing His Majesty's views at first hand and of thus being in a position of reporting them to me orally. If you hold this language, please bear in mind conclusion of previous paragraph.

As regards Fuad Bey's possible visit to London in the autumn, my department would, of course, be glad to see him and discuss unofficially the various questions.

Your telegram No. 145 of 15th June has now been received. I agree that, in mentioning preceding paragraphs to Fuad Bey, you should certainly emphasise that conversations with him would not be formal.

[E 4125/79/25]

No. 97.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received June 24.)*

(No. 151.)  
(Telegraphic.)

Jedda, June 24, 1934.

MY telegram No. 148.

Fuad admits he was misinformed and that Imam's instrument of ratification reached Hodeida in time for exchange on 22nd June, as reported by senior naval officer, Red Sea. Text of treaty was circulated to foreign missions here on 23rd June.

(Repeated to Resident at Aden, No. 133, and senior officer, Red Sea sloops, No. 33.)

[E 4180/77/25]

No. 98.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received June 26.)*

(No. 184.)  
Sir,

Jedda, June 12, 1934.

THE projects of Taalat Pasha Harb, which have formed the subject of correspondence ending with Cairo despatch to me No. 2 of the 5th January, a copy of which was sent to you, gave rise some months ago, when they attracted more attention than they have done recently, to some speculation as to possible development in the political situation between this country and Egypt. This is a subject which never seems to excite much interest in Saudi circles nowadays. It is doubtless often in the mind of Ibn Saud and some of his advisers, but I rarely hear it referred to, except on occasions when something happens to inflame suspicion, as at the time of the Ibn Rifada affair in 1932 and the other day, when the Saudi Government were very ready to think that the Imam Yahya's appeal for Egyptian mediation was a put-up job. Otherwise they seem content to jog along on the present basis. They have very little use for the present Egyptian consul here, but they were delighted to see a great increase in the number of Egyptian pilgrims this year, and they have not of late put obstacles in the way of Egyptian arrangements in connexion with the pilgrimage. When the Egyptian consul and the agents gave the party mentioned in paragraphs 71 (a) and 85 of the Jedda report for April, the Governor of Jedda was the principal guest, though no political Saudi personage was present. "Civil, but strange," describes the Saudi attitude, with rather more emphasis of late on the civility than on the strangeness.

2. I understand that the subject excites more interest in Egypt, where there is a certain current of opinion, not strong enough apparently to influence King Fuad or his Government, in favour of the establishment of normal relations. My reason for reverting to it now is that the local paper *Saut-al-Hejaz* gave prominence in its issue of the 11th June to a statement said to have been made to the well-known Egyptian journalist Mahmoud Azmi Bey by Ibn Saud himself. Mahmoud Azmi came here in quest of war news and was hospitably entertained at Taif. The statement attributed to the King appears to have been copied into the *Saut-al-Hejaz* from *Al Jihad* of Cairo, one of the papers he represented.



3. The King is said to have begun by dismissing as merely evil-minded statements in a telegram from London, which had appeared in some Egyptian paper, to the effect that the Saudis disliked the Egyptians and regarded them as an easy prey. He left the first statement to the judgment of the multitudes of Egyptians who had visited the Hejaz under his régime and had been well received. He denied the implication in the second statement that he had any ambitions in regard to Egypt, emphasising the good disposition of this country towards her and the ties of Islam, Arab nationality, economic interest and propinquity connecting the two. He denied the existence of any disagreement and disclaimed responsibility for the present state of their relations, as he had done his best and was still doing all he could to promote agreement. The only matters outstanding, he said, were the recognition and the question of Awqaf. He cared little for the formality of recognition, so long as true friendship and good intentions prevailed. He left it to his Egyptian brethren, and would fall in with their views, whether they thought it would be advantageous or otherwise. As for the Awqaf he had no responsibility. They belonged to the Egyptian dead, with whose successors it lay to fulfil their wishes as an honourable charge. He had no interest in the matter, as the money would go to the poor of the Holy Places. Benevolence to those would have its reward and he who would not practise it could do as he liked.

4. It may be true that Ibn Saud is not seriously concerned over the question of recognition, though in principle he likes to be recognised by as many Powers as possible. His language about the Haramayn Waqfs sounds singularly mild, considering how eager he and his Government have been to assert Hejazi rights in respect of such Waqfs. He does not seem to have made any reference, or at any rate none fit for publication, to the question of the Sacred Caravan.

5. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's representative at Cairo.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

[E 4285/79/25]

No. 99.

*Senior Officer, Red Sea Sloops, to Admiralty.*

(Telegraphic.)

June 29, 1934.

SITUATION report. About 1,500 Saudi leave by sea to-day. Also peace mission. Feisal expects to leave Sunday.

My 1949 27th June. Azio informs me to-day he has now received instructions to withdraw with British and French when all are satisfied with security of subjects and property.

[E 4280/79/25]

No. 100.

*Sir E. Drummond to Sir John Simon.—(Received June 30.)*

(No. 195.)

(Telegraphic.) R.

Rome, June 30, 1934.

ITALIAN Government are now anxious to withdraw all their ships from Hodeida, as they consider danger of disturbances there has ceased. I understand that they intended to withdraw in any case their two destroyers, but they hope that withdrawal of the other vessels may be effected simultaneously with that of our ships. Their senior naval officer has been instructed to get into touch with his British colleague on the subject.

(Repeated to Jedda.)

## CHAPTER II.—IRAQ.

[E 10/10/93]

No. 101.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received January 1, 1934.)*

(No. 797.)

Sir,

Bagdad, December 20, 1933.

IN my despatch No. 720 of the 16th November last I informed you that the Iraqi Government had submitted a National Service Bill to the Chamber, where it had been received with acclamation. I now have the honour to transmit a copy of the text of this Bill, together with a copy of the scheme prepared by the Chief of the General Staff for the organisation of the Iraqi army when the Bill becomes law.<sup>(1)</sup>

2. The draft law itself does differ greatly from that which was prepared in 1931. I would invite your attention, however, to the important additional provision contained in article 38 enabling the execution of the law to be postponed in any area where its application may not be expedient. At the time when the draft law of 1931 was under consideration I was at pains to emphasise to the late King Feisal and to the Cabinet then in office the necessity for the inclusion of a saving clause of this kind, and if the present Bill is adopted by Parliament, article 38 will, I think, very soon prove its value.

3. Other minor differences in the new Bill as compared with the old are the reduction of colour service in the infantry from two years to eighteen months (article 2), which is balanced to some extent by an increase of reserve service from four years to four years and two months, and the addition of the definition of the grades of reserve officers, which is now given in Chapter III.

4. No final decision has yet been reached regarding future army organisation, but I am advised that a scheme on the lines of that which has been prepared by the Chief of the General Staff is likely to be adopted. This differs widely from General Rowan-Robinson's scheme, to which I referred in my despatch No. 249 of the 20th April, 1933. I am not yet in a position to say how much the Chief of the General Staff's scheme or its two alternatives would cost, but it would appear that an army organised as he proposes would be more expensive than that planned by General Rowan-Robinson. In any event, I think it is probable that modifications of some importance are likely to be introduced into the scheme before it is finally adopted, and I am accordingly reserving detailed comment until the Government have come to a more concrete decision in this regard.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

[E 13/13/93]

No. 102.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received January 1, 1934.)*

(No. 801.)

Sir,

Bagdad, December 20, 1933.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 491 of the 12th December reporting the appointment of Mr. O'Meara to the Hillah Court, I have the honour to inform you that the Iraqi Government, prior to making the appointment, intimated to me their intention to modify in some respects the existing administrative organisation of the judiciary in this country.

2. As you are aware, Iraq is at present divided into six judicial districts, each under the supervision of a president of the court of sessions, who, under the Judicial Agreement of 1931, must be a British judge. The territorial jurisdiction of the courts of sessions corresponds to the area of the districts and the presidents have judicial and administrative authority over the subordinate criminal courts within the district and hear appeals against the judgments given



by these courts. The presidents of the courts of sessions are also presidents of the local court of first instance. By virtue of a ministerial instruction of the 24th April, 1930, which created the judicial administrative districts, they have also limited power of administrative inspection over the other civil courts within the district, but do not hear civil appeals, which are all sent direct to the Court of Civil Appeal in Bagdad.

3. The Iraqi Government now propose to cancel the instruction of the 24th April, 1930, to which I have referred, and thereby to abolish the judicial districts. This step at first appears somewhat drastic, but after close examination of the position I am satisfied that it will not diminish in any important respect the authority of the British judges. They will remain, as hitherto, presidents of the courts of sessions and of first instance, and the territorial jurisdiction of these courts and the appellate functions of the courts of sessions will remain unaltered. They will lose only their powers to inspect other civil courts within the districts. In most of the courts, however, the judge and the clerks are engaged in both civil and criminal work and, since the court personnel will remain under the British judges (as presidents of the courts of sessions) in criminal matters, this loss of power is not important. Moreover, I am informed that even under the present system the British judges, for a variety of reasons, seldom exercise the powers of inspection of the civil courts, which they enjoy under the ministerial instructions to which I have referred above.

4. I have consulted Mr. Drower, the adviser to the Ministry of Justice, and he has assured me that the cancellation of the instruction setting up the judicial districts involves only changes of a minor nature which do not affect in any material particular the régime established under the Judicial Agreement. I have accordingly informed the Iraqi Government that I see no objection to their giving effect to this proposal, which is, I consider, merely a face-saving device and not intended to derogate from the authority or influence of the six British judges, who have all now been appointed in the manner provided for in article 2 of the Judicial Agreement.

5. A letter dated the 11th December was sent by the Ministry of Justice to Mr. O'Meara informing him that he has been appointed president of the courts of sessions and first instance at Hillah and directing him to proceed there and take up his appointment. I will inform you later about the duties which have been assigned to Mr. Campbell, the ninth legal expert, who is stationed at Bagdad as assistant to the adviser to the Ministry of Justice.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

[E 16/16/93]

No. 103.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received January 1, 1934.)*

(No. 805. Confidential.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, December 21, 1933.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 781, Confidential, of the 13th December, I have the honour to inform you that the Cabinet have not yet reached a decision as regards the allotment of the Habbaniyah Escape contract.

2. The Ministry of Economics and Communications submitted their recommendations as to the tender to be accepted some two months ago. There was at first unavoidable delay owing to the fall of the Cabinet, but the new Cabinet has now been sitting for nearly six weeks and matters are still hanging fire. There is little doubt that the death of King Feisal has deprived the Government's development programme, temporarily at least, of much of its driving power; and that the Ministers are afraid to take the responsibility of signing the Habbaniyah contract. I have impressed upon His Majesty King Ghazi the damage to Iraq's credit abroad entailed by further delay. Nuri Pasha-al-Said, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Rustam Beg Haidar, the Minister of Economics and Communications, have both assured me that they will do all they can to expedite a decision. Nasrat-al-Farisi, the Minister of Finance, is hanging back, and the other Ministers are following him.

3. I am informed that, in the tender documents, tenderers were given to understand that the contract would be allotted within three months of issue of the tender, *i.e.*, by the 15th January. It looks as if the Cabinet mean to wait till the last possible moment before taking the plunge, and, for the reason indicated in the following paragraph, at least until after the New Year, but it is to be hoped that they will allot the contract before issue of the invitation to tender for the Kut barrage, of which the preliminary notice was reported in my despatch Overseas Trade No. (A) 31 of the 14th December.

4. Possibly an additional reason for the reluctance of the Cabinet to commit themselves to expenditure on the Habbaniyah Escape is their apprehension as to the intentions of the Iraq Petroleum Company in regard to payment of the sums due to the Iraqi Government on the 1st January under the terms of their concession. The British Oil Development Company have already warned the Iraqi Government through Lord Glenconner that their payment may not be forthcoming on due date: and there are strong rumours abroad that the Iraq Petroleum Company will refuse next year to pay on a gold basis and will offer to pay in sterling. The chances of this development may be reduced by the decision of the House of Lords in the case of the Société intercommunale belge d'Electricité reported in the press telegrams of the 16th December: but, under article 40 of the Iraq Petroleum Company Convention, arbitration would be referred in the last resort to the Permanent Court of International Justice, so that this decision is not necessarily relevant. The Cabinet foresee that, if the Iraq Petroleum Company do refuse to pay in gold, the Government will probably be involved in costly arbitration proceedings.

5. A figure of £140,625 has been included in the main budget for the British Oil Development Company payment. If it does not materialise, this sum may have to be transferred to the main budget from the Capital Works account, *i.e.*, from the Iraq Petroleum Company's payments. The latter in 1932-33 amounted to £524,397. The Government have assumed that an equivalent amount will be available for the Capital Works account for 1933-34. If the British Oil Development Company do not pay and the Iraq Petroleum Company only pay £400,000 sterling, the 1933-34 Capital Works revenue may thus have to be reduced by some £265,000. In addition to this there is the possibility that no payment at all will be received from the Iraq Petroleum Company until arbitration procedures are concluded, and the cost of the arbitration proceedings themselves. Although I see no reason to suppose that the Government is not financially in a position to put the Habbaniyah Escape works in hand, even in the face of these contingencies, the Cabinet may well think it prudent to avoid a decisive step in the matter of the Habbaniyah on account of them.

6. I have sent a copy of this despatch to the Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

[E 281/1/93]

No. 104.

*Memorandum respecting Assyrian Resettlement.—Position on January 10, 1934.*

(Confidential.)

THE committee set up by the Council of the League on the 14th October, 1933, was established—

- (a) To consider whether the settlement outside Iraq of those Assyrians who might wish to leave the country would be possible in practice, and if so to take all necessary steps in collaboration with the Iraqi Government to prepare and execute a detailed scheme.
- (b) Eventually to examine in consultation with the Iraqi Government the measures taken by that Government to give full effect to the Council's resolution of the 15th December, 1932, so far as concerns those Assyrians who might wish to remain in Iraq.
- (c) To receive reports from the Iraqi Government regarding the measures taken to ensure the safety of the Assyrians in Iraq to assist the families left destitute by the events of last August and to rebuild villages wholly or partially destroyed in the course of those events.



2. In the early stages of its work the committee had before it a memorandum by the Iraqi Government regarding the number and distribution of the Assyrians in Iraq. In this memorandum it was estimated that out of a total of about 20,000 persons, some 14,000 persons would almost certainly wish to go, while some 2,000 would wish to stay. The choice of the remainder, numbering some 4,000, was regarded as uncertain. The Iraqi Government have since shown a tendency to minimise the numbers likely to leave, and it is evident that their main desire is to get rid of the 5,000 or so Assyrians of the tribes most closely associated with the Mar Shimun and to keep in Iraq as many as possible of the remainder, who may form a useful make-weight to the Kurds.

3. The Council Committee felt that the wishes of the Assyrians regarding departure from Iraq could scarcely be consulted until a destination had been fixed. For the purpose of estimating costs, however, it was decided to work on the basis that at least 10,000 would require removal, and the committee began to look round for a place large enough to accommodate all the Assyrians in Iraq (namely 20,000) if they wished to leave.

4. While awaiting the result of enquiries into possible destinations, the committee decided on the organisation to be set up in Iraq to make detailed arrangements there in connexion with the eventual removal of those Assyrians who wished to leave. A resolution on this point, passed on the 31st October, took note of the intention of the Iraqi Government to nominate a local committee composed of the land settlement expert (Major Thomson) as president; an administrative inspector (*i.e.*, a British official) as vice-president; the interested kaimakam or mudir and the Assyrian village headman concerned. The first task of this committee was to explain to the Assyrians the exact meaning of the League Council's decision of the 14th October and the fact that a Council Committee was examining plans for the execution of that decision.

5. The resolution of the 31st October further provided that, as soon as possible after a place of settlement had been definitely fixed, a representative of the Nansen Office appointed by that office in agreement with the president of the Council Committee should proceed to Iraq to collaborate with the local committee and the local authorities in the twofold task of (*a*) ascertaining which persons wish to leave Iraq, and (*b*) taking all necessary measures for their departure, such as the liquidation of property, their participation in the cost of transport and resettlement, and their conveyance from their homes to the port selected.

6. The local committee accomplished the first of its tasks, *i.e.*, the explanation to the Assyrians, during the last days of November and the first ten days of December. The remainder of its work depends on the choice of a place of settlement.

7. As regards this choice, the only concrete scheme which has so far appeared sufficiently practicable to enable the Council Committee to take it into detailed consideration is one prepared by the Nansen Office for settlement on land belonging to a British company of high standing—Paraná Plantations (Limited)—in Brazil. The possibility of the settlement in Ecuador of as many as 10,000 Assyrians was suggested in October by the Ecuadorean Minister at Berne, but further discussions revealed that this suggestion was a personal one put forward without instructions from his Government. Suggestions were made from one source or another for settlement in Syria, France, Spain, Cyprus, Palestine, the United States, Persia and Turkey, but the United States was considered to be out of the question, and Persia and Turkey unsuitable, while the other countries were ruled out by the Governments responsible for them. The question of settlement in some part of the British Colonial Empire has been exhaustively discussed with the Colonial Office, but there appears to be no territory which would be suitable for the Assyrians, and in which they could be accommodated without creating grave new problems. The Council Committee has not yet been definitely informed that all prospect of settlement in the British Colonial Empire is ruled out, but the United Kingdom representative has repeatedly made it clear that, while His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom were actively exploring possibilities, no suitable area has so far been found.

8. The League Secretariat has addressed enquiries to the Governments of New Zealand, Australia, Canada, South Africa, the Argentine and Mexico as to their willingness in principle to receive the Assyrians, and replies to these

enquiries are still awaited. It seems unlikely, however, that any of the Governments concerned, with the conceivable exception of the Argentine, will be favourably disposed.

9. There is thus at present no visible alternative to settlement in Brazil.

10. When the Nansen Office first suggested a scheme for settlement in Brazil, the League Secretariat approached the Brazilian Government as to their willingness in principle to agree to the mass immigration of Assyrians. It was not supposed at first that this would give rise to any difficulty, but owing, in the main, to lack of knowledge of the Assyrians, the reply of the Brazilian Government, when it arrived, was most discouraging. It was to the effect that the Brazilian Government were only prepared to accept 100 families as an experiment on certain conditions. Every effort was made to induce the Brazilian Government to change their mind. Action in this sense by the Spanish Ambassador in Rio, acting on behalf of the Council Committee (whose president is a Spaniard) was supported unofficially by His Majesty's Embassy, and a personal message was sent by the Secretary of State to the Brazilian Minister for Foreign Affairs, expressing the hope that the matter would be reconsidered. These efforts eventually produced a more favourable reply, to the effect that the Brazilian Government were prepared to accept all the Assyrians in groups of 500 families as and when they could be accommodated by Paraná Plantations (Limited) on three conditions: (*a*) That the Assyrians were agriculturalists; (*b*) that no expense should devolve on the Brazilian Government; (*c*) that Paraná Plantations (Limited) should assume responsibility for repatriating the Assyrians or resettling them elsewhere at its expense if they failed to adapt themselves to Brazil.

11. The Council Committee, which had been obliged to suspend its work pending the elucidation of the attitude of the Brazilian Government, will meet in Geneva on the 15th January to consider this reply from the Brazilian Government and the resulting situation.

12. The committee will probably feel called upon to engage in further discussions with the Brazilian Government regarding the third of the above-mentioned conditions. It is obviously impossible for Paraná Plantations (Limited) to accept that condition, and if the Brazilian Government insist upon defining where the responsibility shall lie for the retransfer of the Assyrians if they fail to settle in Brazil, that responsibility will presumably have to be accepted by the League. It would be much better, however, if the Brazilian Government could be persuaded merely to disclaim responsibility for themselves in such an event. It is undesirable, if it can be avoided, that the League should have a continuing liability for the Assyrians in Brazil. Furthermore, the condition, if maintained, will have an unfortunate psychological effect on the Assyrians themselves. They will continue to regard themselves as temporary settlers only, and will be encouraged, whenever they find that things are not going quite smoothly, to demand that they should be transferred elsewhere forthwith. Furthermore, as the condition is now worded, it would apply to individual Assyrians who might wish to leave, even though the community as a whole was perfectly satisfied, and who might be in a position to pay for their own resettlement elsewhere; this would be a most unfair position.

13. In addition to further negotiations regarding the third of the conditions laid down by the Brazilian Government, it will no doubt be necessary for the committee to go into more detail with the Brazilian Government regarding the status and treatment which the Assyrians will enjoy in Brazil. Some official assurance will have to be obtained, for instance, from the Brazilian Government that the Assyrians will enjoy religious toleration. Furthermore, the question of nationality requires to be cleared up, and it will be necessary to ensure in some way that, until and unless they acquire Brazilian nationality, the Assyrians will receive fair treatment, *e.g.*, in legal matters.

14. Simultaneously with the discussion of these points with the Brazilian Government, the committee will almost certainly send out to Brazil a mission of investigation. Favourable reports regarding the area in question have already been received, and a certain number of Russians, Germans, Danzigers and Japanese appear to have settled down satisfactorily there. At the same time the committee has hitherto felt that, before finally deciding on Brazil, it would be advisable to have the opinion of someone with personal knowledge of Assyrian needs and characteristics as to whether the Assyrians were likely to thrive in the



area concerned. It is not merely a question of safeguarding the responsibility of the Council Committee, but it is desirable that, in putting the Brazilian scheme before the Assyrians, it shall be possible to inform them that it has been favourably reported upon by someone in whom they themselves have confidence. The Council Committee has accordingly decided in principle to send out to Brazil Brigadier J. G. Browne, C.M.G., C.B.E., D.S.O., who commanded the Assyrian levies in Iraq from 1926 to 1933, and who, by reason of his travels in Assyrian districts, is well acquainted with conditions in which the Assyrians live. There is reason to suppose that Brigadier Browne enjoys the confidence both of the Assyrians and of the Iraqi Government.

15. The *rapporteur's* report, which was adopted by the Council of the League on the 14th October, provided that the Council Committee should report progress to the Council at its January session. A report to the Council will accordingly have to be drawn up, and while it will not be possible to say that Brazil has definitely been accepted as a possible destination for the Assyrians, the report will no doubt take the line that there is sufficient prospect of the Brazilian project proving suitable to make it necessary to consider without further delay the question of finance. The Iraqi Government at the Council meeting of the 14th October promised as generous a contribution as the resources of Iraq admitted, but it has not yet been possible to bring the Iraqi Government to the point of making a definite offer. There is reason to believe that it may be impossible to obtain from them more than £100,000, whereas the cost of resettling the Assyrians in Brazil is likely to vary between £300,000 if 10,000 persons elect to go there, and £600,000 if all the Assyrians wish to go. It is, perhaps, reasonable to assume that at least 15,000 Assyrians will go, in which case the total cost to be faced will be in the region of £450,000. It is not clear where the money required over and above the Iraqi contribution is to come from. There appears to be no doubt that many of the Assyrians will be in a position to pay some or all of their own expenses, both for transport and settlement. Furthermore, it may be possible to raise a comparatively small sum, estimated at not more than £25,000, from charitable sources in the United Kingdom. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have declared that, while they can only contemplate payment as part of a League scheme, they are ready to bear their share of a League contribution. Unfortunately, a contribution by the League does not appear to be practicable. The report of the Council Committee will almost certainly have to draw the attention of the Council to the need of finding money, and the Council will no doubt have to take some decision unless the whole question of Assyrian settlement is to be postponed for yet another three months.

16. The local committee set up in Iraq has, as already stated in paragraph 6 above, accomplished its first task, and a report on its proceedings has been forwarded by the Iraqi Government to the Secretary-General of the League. It appears that this report will show that the local committee discovered that a number of the Assyrians who wish to leave Iraq are not prepared to go to the same place as the Mar Shimun or to be within his sphere of influence. The inference which the Council Committee will be asked to consider is that two separate areas must be found. This may be a question of some difficulty, but for the time being the Council Committee can scarcely do otherwise than continue its present efforts to find a single area in which all the Assyrians from Iraq can be accommodated if necessary. The question of a second settlement can perhaps be left until the eventuality apprehended by the local committee actually arises. It seems unlikely that an alternative settlement in another country can be found, but it is possible that in case of need another area owned by a subsidiary of Paraná Plantations (Limited) can be made available, some 200 miles distant from the area at present under discussion.

17. It is probable that as the Mar Shimun will be in Geneva the Council Committee will be faced with complaints that the position of the Assyrians now in Iraq is far from satisfactory. Reports received in the Foreign Office on this question are conflicting, though some of them are to the effect that the Iraqi Government have not made proper arrangements for the return of the Assyrians to their villages, that there is consequently much destitution in Mosul, and that the condition of the refugee camp in Mosul is unsatisfactory. If these allegations are made at Geneva there may be a renewed demand for the despatch to Iraq of some representative of the League or of the Council Committee to supervise the treatment of the Assyrians pending their transfer elsewhere. The difficulty of this question needs no emphasising.

18. A further question which the Council Committee will have to consider is the liquidation, before the Assyrians leave Iraq, of the property belonging to them and debts owed to them. If possible, it seems desirable to set up some kind of clearing-house system, under which the Iraqi Government would purchase the property of the Assyrians at a valuation to be fixed, perhaps, by the Nansen representative, the proceeds being credited to the Assyrians concerned, but applied in the first place to their settlement in Brazil. A similar procedure might be applied to the debts, but before these can be taken over by the Iraqi Government, it is necessary to establish their validity. A suggestion has been made by Major Thomson to the Iraqi Government that this should be done in the near future, preferably by one of the British judges in Iraq.

19. A further question which may have to be submitted to the Council for decision is the provision of funds for the extra expense in which the Nansen Office will be involved if the work of settling the Assyrians is entrusted to that Office as has been already decided in principle.

J. C. STERNDAL BENNETT.

Eastern Department,  
Foreign Office, January 11, 1934.

[E 335/1/93]

No. 105.

(C./Min.Ass./16.)

LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

*Situation of the Assyrians in Iraq. Letter dated December 21, 1933, from the Government of Iraq to the Secretary-General.—(Received in Foreign Office January 15, 1934.)*

*Note by the Secretary-General.*

AT the request of the Iraqi Government, the Secretary-General has the honour to communicate to the members of the Committee for the Establishment of the Assyrians of Iraq a letter, with four enclosures, addressed to him on the 21st December, 1933, by the Government of Iraq under the terms of paragraph 5 of the report concerning the situation of Assyrians in Iraq adopted by the Council on the 14th October, 1933.

Geneva, January 8, 1934.

*Government of Iraq to the Secretary-General, League of Nations.*

Sir,

December 21, 1933.

BY its resolution of the 14th October, 1933, paragraph 5, regarding the Assyrians, the Council requested the Iraqi Government to keep the Committee of Six informed of the steps taken (a) to assist destitute families; (b) to ensure the safety of Assyrians in Iraq; (c) to rebuild villages partly or wholly destroyed.

2. As regards relief, two reports by Major Thomson to 15th September, 1933, were appended to the observations forwarded with Yasin Pasha's letter of the 5th October (Document C. 567.1933.I). I now forward a further report by Major Thomson covering the whole period to 30th November, 1933 (Enclosure I).<sup>(1)</sup>

3. The special police measures taken to protect the Assyrians were briefly referred to in paragraph 14 of the same observations, to which a map showing the location of twenty-four new police posts was attached. A list of villages where posts have since been established or abolished, as circumstances have required, is appended (Enclosure II).<sup>(2)</sup> In view of the general improvement in the situation, the number of additional police specially recruited at the time of the disturbances, and subsequently retained for the protection of villages, has been reduced to 250. The whole area is constantly and vigorously patrolled. A special escort, under an Assyrian head-constable, was attached to the pastoral tribe of Ashuti, which itself has 500 rifles, for its winter migration to the south.

4. The number of registered rifles in possession of each Assyrian village at the end of November is also given in Enclosure II; in addition, the Assyrians

<sup>(1)</sup> Enclosure 2 in No.

<sup>(2)</sup> Not printed



possess many unregistered rifles. Although they are not strictly necessary, further rifles are now being issued, under proper safeguards, to the villagers of Shaikhan, principally with a view to giving confidence to shepherds, who are obliged to take their sheep to distant pastures.

5. As a result of the various measures taken the state of general security in the Assyrians' area is now good. Apart from the incident of the three shepherds killed by Turkish tribesmen from across the border mentioned in the observations forwarded with the Iraqi delegation letter of the 9th October, 1933 (League Document C.573.1933.I), which occurred on the 29th September (and not on the 1st September, as stated, owing to a telegraphic error), three violent deaths have been reported in the last three months, viz., between the 15th September and the 15th December, 1933: (1) One Hurmuz Bello was killed by persons unknown on the 30th September at Haishi; (2) on the 10th October a man of Lower Tiyari, while guarding his sheep, was killed by persons unknown; (3) on the 7th December two Assyrians of Diana, who had lost their way while out shooting, were attacked at night by Kurds; Yokhannis Enwiya was killed and Jams Mirza seriously wounded; one of the accused has been arrested.

6. The experienced British official referred to in paragraph 13 of the observations noted above remained one month in the area. He visited every Assyrian village, enquired into the damage done and the condition of the population, and reported on the measures to be taken in each to enable the villagers to resume their normal life. Following his report, houses have been repaired, woodwork has been replaced, grain, both for food and seed, mules and oxen for ploughing, ploughs, blankets and cash have been issued to the villagers. Detailed statements of villages repaired and assistance given in kind and cash are appended (Enclosures III and IV).<sup>(\*)</sup> The execution of this work was hindered in some cases by the attitude of the Assyrians themselves, who refused to work on the repair of their own houses even for a daily wage; in other cases villagers, hearing of the Council's decision, abandoned their villages and left for Mosul, after relief had been distributed or repairs begun. In addition to the issue of grain referred to above, abandoned crops were saved for the owners by the administrative authorities, who had these reaped, threshed, &c., by hired labour.

7. You are requested to circulate this letter to members of the committee.

I have, &c.

(For Minister for Foreign Affairs),  
NAJI-AL-ASIL.

(\*) Not printed.

[E 325/325/93]

No. 106.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received January 15.)*

(No. 3.)

Sir,

Bagdad, January 4, 1934.

WITH reference to the memorandum enclosed in your despatch No. 460 of the 27th July last, and connected correspondence, I have the honour to inform you that, at a meeting of the Iraqi Chamber of Deputies held on the 21st December, a discussion took place regarding the work of the Iraqi delegation to London in the summer of 1933.

2. The discussion arose after the reading of a draft law for the appropriation of certain sums in respect of the 1933 budget. This law included an allotment to cover the expenses of the delegation to London, and several Deputies asked questions regarding it, complaining of the Government's "secrecy" on the subject. After a brief and non-committal reply by the Prime Minister, Yasin Pasha Al Hashimi made a statement regarding the results achieved by the delegation, of which he was the head. First, they attended the World Economic Conference. Secondly, they made contact with various financial houses in England with a view to ascertain the conditions under which Iraq might expect to obtain a loan for development works in the event of the Government deciding on this course. Thirdly, they discussed the future of the Iraqi railways and the procedure for "handing them over to Iraq." Fourthly, they discussed with the British authorities concerned the possibility of a reduction in the United Kingdom tariff on Iraqi dates. Fifthly, they approached shipping companies with a view to reduction of freight rates for Iraqi exports. Lastly, they investigated the

possibility of establishing a State bank. Yasin Pasha concluded by pointing out that this was merely an outline of the work of the delegation in London, and suggested that on the whole the results were encouraging.

3. Apart from these discussions in the Chamber of Deputies, certain newspapers have also criticised the delegation on the grounds that the results which they achieved were a small return for the large sum of public money which they spent. On the 25th December the *Istiqal* attempted to refute these criticisms in an article based largely on the speech of Yasin Pasha outlined above. This article contained a number of mis-statements, which the Government corrected in an official communiqué issued on the 27th December to the following effect:—

"Two days ago one of the local newspapers published a leading article on the subject of the mission of the Iraqi delegation to London, in which it was stated that the delegation carried out negotiations on the basis of the acquisition of the railways, the port, and Iraqi army buildings free of charge, and that the Iraqi Government had endeavoured at the Disarmament Conference to prohibit air forces from undertaking military operations, whether internal or external, with a view to depriving 'aerodromes' of their military value.

"The statements of the newspaper on the above-mentioned questions do not agree with the facts. The question of the acquisition of the port and Iraqi army buildings, free of cost, was not the subject of any discussions whatever, nor was any reference made to it either in the Council of Ministers' resolution of the 27th May, 1933, which defined the mission of the delegation, or in the note by the president of the delegation explaining the official endeavours made in London, or in his recent statement in Parliament.

"As regards the railways question, discussion had taken place in Bagdad, before the departure of the delegation to London, on the articles of the draft law for the formation of a Railways Corporation under clause (a) of the annexure to the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty. There remained, however, certain points over which no agreement was reached, and while in London the delegation resumed the discussions concerning this draft law, and agreement was reached over part thereof. Such is what has been officially achieved in London. The transfer of ownership of the railways to the Iraqi Government and the registration thereof in the name of the said Government, is a point on which the Iraqi Government had insisted, having regard to stipulations of clause (a) of the financial annexure to the treaty.

"All that was reported by the newspaper in question in connexion with discussions at the Disarmament Conference has no foundation in truth. The fact is that the discussions in question did not turn upon the use of British air forces in Iraq, but upon the use of the Iraqi Royal Air Forces, which, together with the Iraqi army, are exclusively responsible for the maintenance of the external and internal security of the State."

Since the issue of the communiqué, the *Istiqal* has published an article deploring this repudiation by the present Government of the alleged achievements of the delegation in obtaining concessions from His Majesty's Government, particularly the handing over of the Iraqi railways free of cost. *Tariq* thereupon challenged *Istiqal* to produce proofs of any such achievements, while claiming that all Iraqi Cabinets have maintained that the railways should be handed over without payment.

4. I should explain that the press controversy is inspired, on the one hand, by the desire of the Ikha party to magnify the work in London done by their leader, Yasin Pasha, and, on the other, by the wish of Nuri Pasha's supporters to belittle the achievements of a delegation appointed by a Government in which Yasin Pasha's supporters predominated. The *Tariq* is the organ of the Ahd party, led by Nuri Pasha; while the *Istiqal* habitually supports the Ikha-al-Watani (party of National Brotherhood), of which Yasin Pasha is the moving spirit.

5. I have sent a copy of this despatch to the Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.



[E 653/653/93]

No. 107.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received January 29.)*

(No. 4.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, January 4, 1934.*

WITH reference to your circular despatch of the 31st March, 1933, I have the honour to transmit herewith a record of the leading personalities in Iraq.

2. I have noted your instructions regarding future reports on this subject.

I have, &amp;c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

Enclosure in No. 107.

*Records of Leading Personalities in Iraq.*

## THE ROYAL FAMILY.

1. *Ghazi, King of Iraq.*

YOUNGEST child and only son of King Feisal. Born in the Hejaz at Mecca in 1911. Came to Bagdad in 1923 with his mother and sisters. Was educated first by an English governess, and later at Harrow, where he made little progress, owing to the inadequate preparation which he had received before entering the school. On his return to Iraq he went through the normal course of training at the Iraqi Military Cadet College. He learnt to be a good horseman, but was a poor student of military science. Left the college early in 1933 and became aide-de-camp to his father, King Feisal. Acted as Regent during King Feisal's absence from Iraq in the summer of 1933. Succeeded to the throne on King Feisal's death on the 8th September, 1933. Soon after his accession he was betrothed to Aliyah, the eldest daughter of his uncle, ex-King Ali of the Hejaz. He has to shoulder heavy responsibilities for one who has so little experience of affairs.

2. *Ali, ex-King of the Hejaz.*

Eldest son of Hussein, first King of the Hejaz, and eldest brother of the late King Feisal. He came to Bagdad in June 1926 after Ibn Saud had forced him to abdicate and abandon his country. Since then he has lived quietly in Bagdad on money supplied from the Royal Privy Purse. On several occasions he has acted as Regent during the absence of King Feisal from Iraq. He has one son, Abdul Illah, aged about 18. He would like to send him to Oxford or Cambridge, but it is very doubtful if the boy has sufficient general education to profit from a university course. His daughter, Aliyah, was betrothed to King Ghazi in September 1933.

King Ali has aspirations to the Syrian throne, and has more than once had secret conversations with the French Chargé d'Affaires in Bagdad regarding the creation of a monarchist Government for Syria. It is, however, more than doubtful whether the French have ever seriously entertained the idea of making him King of Syria. In the summer of 1933 he went to Switzerland for medical treatment and a holiday, and was with King Feisal in Berne at the time of his death. In the autumn he again went to Europe and stayed a few weeks in Paris, where, it was rumoured, he had further conversations in political quarters on the subject of his candidature for the Syrian throne.

3. *Zaid, His Highness the Amir.*

Born in Constantinople in 1900. Youngest son of the late King Hussein of the Hejaz. Half-brother of King Ali, King Feisal and the Amir Abdullah (of Transjordan). His mother was a Turk. Educated in Constantinople. Fought with the Arab Nationalist forces during the Great War, and won the good opinion of the British officers with the Shereefian army.

Came to live in Iraq in 1922, and was commissioned in the Iraqi cavalry. Acted as Regent for a short time in 1924 during King Feisal's absence.

In 1925 he went to England and studied agriculture at Oxford for nearly three years. During this period he took an active part in the social life of the university and rowed in the torpids for Balliol. In 1928 he joined his father in Cyprus and remained there until King Hussein's death in 1931. Appointed Iraqi Minister at Angora in January 1932.

In 1933 it became known that one of his sisters had contracted a clandestine marriage with Atta Beg Amin, some time first secretary at the Iraqi Legation at Angora (and later at the Legation in London). The Royal Family were indignant, and Zaid was transferred to Cairo in January 1934 as the first Iraqi Minister at King Fuad's Court.

He is a pleasant, well-mannered man, and speaks excellent English and Turkish. Is generally regarded as the pick of the Hashimites.

## OTHER PERSONALITIES.

1. *Abbas-i-Mahmud Agha.*

Chieftain of the Pizhder tribe (Kurdish) (see Babekr Agha). Generally on the side of disorder when trouble is brewing. Maintains a tradition of being at feud with Babekr Agha, but both take care that this enmity shall not weaken the strength of the tribe.

2. *Abbas Mahdi.*

Shiah. Age 40. Secretary to Iraqi Legation in Tehran 1931. Minister for Education, November 1932. Resigned with Cabinet in March 1933. Appointed Director-General of Tapu in October 1933.

3. *Abdul Aziz Beg-al-Mudhaffar, M.B.E.*

Sunni of Bagdad. Served as superintendent to Deputy Military Governor's Office, Bagdad Rasafah, under the Government of Occupation from March 1917, and in 1919 became a Mudir of Rasafah when that office was instituted. Secretary to the Ministry of Interior, December 1920, and also Director of the Press Bureau since 1922. A capable man, somewhat cynical, pro-British. Not popular with extreme Nationalists. Speaks English, German and French well. Director of Census Department 1927. Has had experience as a mutessarif in Diwanayah.

Appointed Mutessarif of Mosul, May 1931. Withdrawn September 1931 for incompetence; tried for misappropriation of public funds. Found not guilty and appointed to be member of Muntafiq Land Court. Lost this post when court was abolished in June 1932. Was appointed first secretary to the Iraqi Legation at Tehran in 1933.

4. *Abdul Aziz-al-Qassab.*

Sunni of Bagdad. Kaimakam of Kut under the Naqib's Provisional Government and did very well. In October 1921 he was appointed Mutessarif of Mosul on probation for six months, but refused to go without the salary of a full mutessarif. In the beginning of 1922 he went as Mutessarif of Karbala, was transferred to Muntafiq in January 1923, and to the Ministry of Interior as Director-General of General Administration in June of the same year. Appointed Mutessarif of Mosul in January 1924. A capable and well-intentioned official without much strength of character. Minister of Interior, January 1928. Minister for Justice, November 1929.

Went out of office with the resignation of Naji Pasha's Cabinet in March 1930. Has not held any other Cabinet post since. Has an adequate pension. Appointed Chief Administrative Inspector, Grade I, November 1933.

5. *Abdul Ghafur-al-Badri.*

Ex-cadet in the Turkish army and second lieutenant in the Shereefian army.

Since 1920 has been editor of extremist Nationalist newspaper, the *Istiqlal*. This journal has been suspended many times for its violent attacks on the British Government and on British officials in Iraq.

Elected Deputy for Diyala 1933.

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6. *Abdul Husain Chalabi-bin-Ali-al-Hujaiji.*

Shiah of Kadhmain. Elder brother of Abdul Ghani Chalabi and representative of the house. Wealthy landowner of Kadhmain, aged about 45. He took a somewhat passive part in the anti-mandate agitation of 1922, but went to Persia on business in July 1922 before the crisis. He returned in November 1922. Minister of Education, November 1922, and subsequently has frequently held this portfolio in different Cabinets. He has little influence in politics, but is usually included in Cabinets as an amenable Shiah.

Minister for Education in Nuri Pasha's Cabinet which came into office in March 1930. Resigned with Nuri Pasha in October 1932. Appointed Senator, November 1933.

7. *Abdul Latif Nuri.*

Born in Bagdad about 1890. Gazetted as officer in the Turkish army in 1908. Joined the Iraqi army in 1921. Promoted Aqid (lieutenant-colonel) in 1926 and brigadier-general (Zaim) in 1929. He has held the command of the Northern and Southern Districts, and has passed the senior and junior officers courses, and was posted to the Northern District in 1933. Promoted Amir Liwa (major-general) in 1932. A close friend of Nuri Pasha.

8. *Abdul Mahdi (Saïyid).*

Shiah of Shutia (Muntafiq). Aged about 45.

Belongs to an influential family and owns a large estate (Abu Hawan Muqatah). Deputy for Kerbala in Turkish Parliament, and has sat in Iraqi Chamber since 1927. Minister for Education under Rashid Ali-al-Gilani, March-October 1933.

Since 1930 he has been a strong partisan of Yasin Pasha and a member of the Executive Committee of the party of National Brotherhood (Hizb-al-Ikha-al-Watani).

9. *Abdul Qadir-al-Rashid.*

Sunni of Bagdad, related to the Gilani family. Age about 30. Speaks English well.

Appointed secretary to the Council of Ministers in 1924 in succession to Hussein Afnan. Remained in that post, the duties of which he discharged with noteworthy tact and efficiency until November 1932, when he was appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs in Naji Shaukat's Cabinet. Resigned with Cabinet in March 1933. Was appointed an assistant manager in the Rafidain Oil Company in October 1933.

10. *Abdul Wahid, Sheikh.*

Chief of the Fatlah tribe, son of Haji Sikkar, once the most powerful sheikh on the Euphrates. Abdul Wahid cultivates extensive properties on the left bank of the Mishkab from Abu Sukhair to the Ibrahim. Throughout recent years he has steered his course with a view to maintaining to the utmost his political and tribal influence. His support and loyalty were carefully cultivated by King Feisal, and all political parties have thought it worth while to try to make him an adherent. On the whole he tends to stand in mostly with Yasin Pasha and the Ikha-al-Watani party. He has many friends and many bitter enemies, and is reputed to deal harshly with his fellaheen.

11. *Abdullah-al-Damluji.*

Formerly called Abdullah Said Effendi. A native of Mosul. Studied medicine in Constantinople and calls himself doctor, though it is believed that he did not graduate. Seems to have been serving in the Turkish army when Ibn Saud occupied Hassa in 1913, and to have transferred his allegiance to Ibn Saud. Soon rose to a position of influence in Ibn Saud's Court, and came to Bagdad as his unofficial representative in 1921. Was Ibn Saud's Minister for Foreign Affairs in 1922 and signed the Uqair Protocol. Went with the Amir Feisal-al-Saud to London in 1926, and took part in the negotiations leading to the conclusion of the Treaty of Jedda in 1927. After this his influence waned owing to the intrigues of Fuad Hamza and Yusuf Yasin.

In August 1928 he represented the Court of Nejd, the Hejaz and its dependencies at the Medina Railway Conference at Haifa. The conference was abortive, and when it terminated, instead of returning to the Hejaz, Abdullah Damluji came to Bagdad, posting his resignation to Ibn Saud. Arrived Bagdad, September 1928. Appointed Iraqi consul-general, Cairo, in 1930, recalled October 1930, and appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs. This at first was resented by Ibn Saud, and for a short time Damluji's presence at the head of the Iraqi Ministry for Foreign Affairs seemed likely to embarrass Nejd and Iraqi relations, but when Nuri Pasha visited Jedda in April 1931 Ibn Saud stated that he no longer wished to raise any objection to Damluji's appointment. Was left out of office when Nuri Pasha reformed his Cabinet in October 1931. Appointed Director-General of Health, July 1932, and succeeded Safwat Pasha as Court Chamberlain at the end of 1933.

12. *Ahmad, Sheikh of Barzan.*

A chieftain of the Kurdish Zibar tribe. Headquarters at Barzan at the foot of the Chia-i-Shirin. Exercised powerful influence over the Barosh and Mazuri Bala areas to the north-west of Rowanduz. Friendly relations were established with him in 1919, but no administrative control was exercised in his tribal area. In 1920 he was implicated in the murder of two British officials. He and Faris Agha of Bera Kapra were declared outlaws with a price on their heads, and Barzan was destroyed by troops, but his country was not occupied. In 1922 he welcomed Turkish agents into Barosh and Mazuri Bala, and in September 1922 his men made an abortive attack on Amadiyah. A month later Barzan was again destroyed by the Royal Air Force co-operating with Assyrian irregulars. In 1923, the Turks having been driven from Rowanduz, Sheikh Ahmad turned on their retreating columns and came into Aqra to make peace with the Anglo-Iraqi authorities. His outlawry was cancelled, and he was permitted to continue in unmolested control of his tribal villages and mountains. In the summer of 1931 he began a private war with a neighbouring chieftain of Baradost, Sheikh Rashid of Lolan. He was everywhere successful, drove Sheikh Rashid to flight into Persia and set fire to his villages. Government intervention became necessary to restore order. Iraqi troops were concentrated early in 1932, and after some sharp fighting followed by intensive air action by the Royal Air Force, Sheikh Ahmad was defeated and driven across the Turkish border in June. He and his two brothers, Muhammad Sadiq and Mulla Mustafa, were interned for a time in Turkey, but the two latter contrived to find their way back into their old haunts in the following winter. After holding out in the mountains for some months they surrendered and were pardoned in July 1933 and allowed to return to their villages. A short time afterwards the Turks surrendered Sheikh Ahmad to the Iraqi Government on condition that his life should be spared. Since then he has been living in honourable detention in Mosul.

13. *Ahmad-al-Sheikh Daud, Saïyid.*

Comes of a family of learned men, his father was a well-known teacher in Bagdad under whom most of the men of Sheikh Ahmad's generation studied. Sheikh Ahmad is a pompous and self-sufficient personage. Under the Turks he was at one time Professor of Divinity at Bagdad, but after fourteen months he was removed by Jamal Pasha for being a champion of the Arab cause and a friend of Yusuf Suwaidi and others of the group which formed the Nadi-al-Ilmi. Sheikh Ahmad was later elected to the General Council of the Vilayet, and the Vali signified his approval, on which account he was recalled to Constantinople. The Committee of Union and Progress continued to molest Sheikh Ahmad, who finally yielded and became, at any rate in appearance, a violent Turcophil. He was then appointed one of the four permanent members of the Vilayet Council and served the Turks with enthusiasm. A few days before the fall of Bagdad he changed his tone and became more English than the English. He did a good deal of propaganda on our behalf. His house was burnt down by the Turks before they left, not, however, as he made out, as an act of vengeance, but because it happened to stand next to the police office and was incidentally destroyed in the destruction of the latter. Was elected Mudir of Auqaf in March 1918, and proved most unsatisfactory. Refused to attend as a delegate the meeting convened on the 22nd January, 1919, which presented a petition in favour of



Islamic Government. In 1920 the post of Mudir of Auqaf was abolished and the work divided between two officials, one of administration and the other for religious questions. Sheikh Ahmad was given the latter job (President of Majlis-al-Ilmi), but was somewhat aggrieved at the change and modified his political sentiments in consequence. He was on the committee of the Ahliyah school founded early in 1920, and was one of the most active agents in the Nationalist agitation of that year, which included a reconciliation between Sunnis and Shi'ahs. He was one of the delegates (Mandubin) who presented a petition in favour of independence in June 1920. Took an active part in stirring up the tribes to revolt. Arrested and deported to Henjam in August 1920. Returned to Bagdad in February 1921. On the arrival of the Amir Feisal he attempted to take a prominent part by announcing, as "Delegate of the People," that he considered him King of Iraq. His efforts caused some amusement. He was elected in April 1922 by a gathering of Bagdad ulema as one of the four Sunni ulema who should go to the Karbala Conference and express to Sheikh Mahdi-al-Khalisi their sympathy with his endeavour to arouse Iraq against the Wahabis. Took part in the anti-mandate agitation, and was chosen in May as one of the eight representatives of the people to protest to the King against the mandate, after a meeting in the Haidar Khana Mosque had been stopped by order of His Majesty. Participated in the demonstration at the King's Levee on the 23rd August, 1922, but evaded arrest and remained in hiding for some months till the deportees were pardoned. In spite of an undertaking to refrain from political agitation, in the spring of 1923 he was working surreptitiously against the elections in obedience to the fatwas. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in March 1924, both in Dulaim and Bagdad. Sat for Bagdad; consistently opposed the treaty and voted against it. Failed to secure a seat in the general election, but got in on a by-election. Anti-everything, and trims his sails to every political gust. In October 1925, although previously anti-treaty, he suddenly veered round. This lasted for some months. He then swung back and voted against ratification of extension of treaty period in January 1926. Minister for Auqaf under Abdul Muhsin Beg in January 1928, left office, April 1929. Since then doing his utmost to get back into the Cabinet. Was still out of public life in June 1931. Apparently a sadder but possibly not a wiser man. Elected to the Chamber as Deputy for Bagdad in October 1933.

#### 14. Ahmad Beg I Taufiq Beg.

A Kurdish notable of Suleimani, age about 40, who has had the advantage of a better education than most of his contemporaries. He has held a number of administrative appointments since the first days of the occupation of the Suleimani Liwa. Was appointed mutessarif after the reoccupation of Suleimani in 1924. The Iraqi Government have several times endeavoured to replace him by others less sympathetic to Kurdish aspirations, but those chosen have not been successful. Ahmad Beg has now (1933) been mutessarif without interruption since 1930. He is connected by marriage with the ruling families of the Pizhder tribe, and owns property in the Surdash nahiyah. A pleasant and presentable man, who has always been popular with British civil and military officers.

#### 15. Ajil-al-Yawar.

Paramount Sheikh of the Shammar Jarba (Arab) tribe of Iraq.

His tribal authority is exercised over the Northern Jazirah from the Sinjar to the Aqarquf depression to the west of Bagdad. A fine man physically, who has cleverly adapted himself to the changing political conditions which have followed the British occupation of Iraq. For some years after the division of the Jazirah between the British and French mandates, tribal troubles were caused by his rivalry with Diham-al-Hadi, the chief of the Shammar, whose territory now lies in Syria. Latterly (1933), however, both Diham and Ajil have settled down to a mutual acceptance of the division of the tribes, and have seemingly agreed to leave each other in peace. Ajil is eager to adopt modern methods of cultivation, and has a number of irrigation pumps.

His eldest son, Sufuq, is being educated at the American college at Beirut (1933), but during the holidays his father wisely makes him return to Bedouin life and habits.

#### 16. Ali Jaudat.

Sunni, of Mosul origin. He comes of very insignificant people; his father was a small shopkeeper. Officer in the Turkish army, fought at Shuaibah; subsequently surrendered to us and spent most of 1915 at Basra. Was then sent to Basra to encourage officer prisoners to join the Sharif. He was a member of the Ahd-al-Iraqi. Military Governor of Aleppo after the resignation of Jafar Pasha early in 1920, and was subsequently in Dair. Returned to Bagdad with the Amir Feisal in June 1921. The Young Arab party in Mosul requested that he should be appointed mutessarif there, but this was not thought advisable, and in October 1921 he was given the post of Mutessarif of Hillah, which he held till September 1922. He took a very active part in the anti-mandate agitation, and was finally dismissed by order of the High Commissioner on its having been shown by a Committee of Enquiry that he had defrauded the Treasury by under-estimating demands on supporters of his political views. In January 1923 he was appointed Mutessarif of Karbala, in the hope that he might be able to reconcile the mujtahids. He was unsuccessful, and in May was transferred to Muntafiq, where he did very well. Minister of Interior in the Askari Cabinet, November 1923 to July 1924, and in his official capacity voted for the treaty. He was a member for Mosul. Appointed Mutessarif of Diyala, and later of Basra. In early 1930 was made Director of the Ministry of the Interior. A pleasant, well-educated man. Studied in Constantinople. Minister for Finance under Nuri Pasha, March 1930. Resigned from Nuri Pasha's Cabinet in September 1930 as a protest against the Anglo-Iraqi treaty of that year. Since then has been associated with the Watani and Ikha-al-Watani parties, but has not actively supported their policy. Resigned his seat in the Chamber in 1931, together with Rashid Ali-al-Gilani and Yasin-al-Hashimi in March 1932. Re-elected for Mosul 1933. Appointed principal private secretary to the King, March 1933.

#### 17. Ali Mahmud.

Sunni, lawyer. Extreme Nationalist, probably at heart pro-Turk; was one of the lawyer group who organised the disturbances during the debates on the treaty, the attack on Addai and Salman-al-Barrak, and the subsequent campaign of intimidation. A frequent contributor of anti-British articles to Nationalist newspapers. Deputy for Kut in elections 1933.

#### 18. Ali Suleiman, Sheikh.

The most influential chieftain of the Dulaim tribe. He has represented the Dulaim constituency since the first Chamber in 1924. He is interested in developing his properties with modern machinery, and has installed a number of irrigation pumps. These interests ensure his support for law and order. His tribe have their area on the right bank of the Euphrates from Ramadi to the Syrian frontier at Albu Kamal. He is very fond of horse-racing, and is friendly to British interests.

#### 19. Amin-bin-Haji Muhammad Husain Charchafji.

Shiah of Bagdad. The family ranks among the smaller notables. Amin is a merchant, fairly well-to-do. He was believed to be in touch with the Turks in 1921. Took part in the anti-mandate agitation of 1922, and was one of the founders of the Hizb-al-Nadhah (Shiah party) in July of that year. He was arrested on the 27th August in connexion with the anti-mandate demonstrations at the King's palace on the 23rd August, at which he was present. Deported to Henjam, and returned to Bagdad in February 1923. President of the Hizb-al-Nadhah 1924-25. A cat's-paw of the ulema. Active in Parliament in 1927, but was not elected at general election in 1928. In 1930 it appeared that he had to a great extent given up politics. Died summer of 1933.

#### 20. Arshad-al-Umari.

Of the well-known Umari family of Mosul. Trained as an engineer in the days of the Turk. Municipal engineer in Constantinople. Staff officer during the war. Member of the first Iraqi Parliament and supporter of Abdul Muhsin



Beg. Appointed by latter first Iraqi Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs. Made Amin-al-Asimah (Mayor of Bagdad), November 1931, and during his two-year tenure of that appointment did much for the improvement of the amenities of Bagdad. Was appointed Director of Irrigation in November 1933, and is suffering at present from megalomania. Speaks French and understands some English. His brother is Mayor of Mosul.

21. *Ata Beg Al Amin.*

Appointed secretary to the Iraqi Legation in London, September 1932, on transfer from a consular post at Angora.

In the summer of 1933 it was discovered that he had, while in Turkey, married one of the sisters of the Amir Zaid, the Iraqi Minister in Angora and younger brother of King Feisal. This was regarded as a scandal, and, although he was temporarily retained in his post in London, Ata Beg's position in the public service became insecure.

22. *Babekr Agha.*

A powerful chief of the Pizhder (Kurdish) tribe of Qalah Diza (on the Lesser Zab River, north of Suleimani). Has always been honest and friendly in his dealings with the Government, whether British or Iraqi. An able and most estimable man, who has been liked and respected by all who have had close contact with him.

His rival for tribal influence is Abbas Mahmud Agha, who has always tended to be against the Government. Both, however, visited Bagdad in October 1933 and protested their loyalty and obedience to the Iraqi Government.

23. *Bahjat Effendi Zainal.*

Sunni of Bagdad. Advocate. Studied in the Law School of Constantinople. During the war he was employed in legal work for the army; he was in Kut with Khalil Pasha; in Persia with Ali Ihsan. Left for Constantinople a month or two before the occupation of Mosul, and returned to Bagdad in 1919, spending eight months in Syria on the way. Very talkative, but has a slight impediment in his speech. His family came originally from Kirkuk, but have long been settled in Bagdad. Convinced Nationalist. In the spring of 1923 he was working against the elections in accordance with the Shiah fatwas. Joined Hizb-al-Nahdhah 1924. Always active in minor Nationalist intrigues, meetings and agitations. Elected Deputy for Bagdad in the general election of 1930. Not re-elected in 1932-33.

24. *Bakr Sidqi-bin-Shauqi.*

Born in Bagdad, 1890, of Kurdish parents. Passed out of the Turkish Military Cadet College in Constantinople in 1908. During the war attained the rank of colonel, and was appointed to the General Staff. Joined the Iraqi army in 1921, and was promoted aqid (lieutenant-colonel) in 1928. In the same year he was appointed G.S.O. 1, Operations Branch, in the Ministry of Defence. At times he has expressed both pro-Turkish and pro-Kurdish opinions. Commanded 2nd Cavalry Regiment 1930. Promoted zaim (brigadier-general) in 1931, and posted to command the Northern District. Studied at the Staff College at Camberley in 1932, and was well reported on. In the summer of 1933 he was in command of the troops which first opposed the Assyrians who were returning from Syria to Iraq, and afterwards indulged in the massacre of Assyrians at Simel. It was, however, never established that he issued the orders for this massacre. Shortly afterwards he was promoted amir liwa (major-general), and, following a period of leave, he was, in December 1933, posted to command the Eastern District, with headquarters at Kirkuk. He is probably the best commander in the Iraqi army.

25. *Daud Beg Al Haidari.*

Sunni of Bagdad. Age 40. Son of Ibrahim Effendi, ex-Sheikh-al-Islam. The family comes from Arbil, where Ibrahim Effendi has a small property. Daud Beg was a Deputy and an aide-de-camp to the Sultan Abdul Hamid.

Speaks Turkish better than Arabic. He was in Constantinople during the war, and returned to Bagdad in 1921. Appointed, in October 1922, Amin-al-Umana (Chamberlain) in the King's palace. Quiet, well-mannered, insignificant, moderate man. Member for Arbil in the Constituent Assembly, March 1924, and Vice-President. Voted for the treaty 1924. Hazb-al-Shab and opposed treaty of 1926. Minister for Justice under Taufiq Suwaidi, April-November 1929. Disliked and distrusted in Arbil (see Haidari family).

Re-elected to Chamber of Deputies to represent Arbil in general election of 1930, but has not held Cabinet appointment since Taufiq Suwaidi's Cabinet resigned in August 1929. In 1930 became lawyer for the British Oil Development Company in Bagdad, and has done quite well out of this work.

26. *Daud-al-Sadi, Saiyid.*

Prominent extremist, lawyer of Bagdad. Usually connected with all Nationalist agitations and intrigues. Sunni of Bagdad. Age 35.

27. *Fahmi Beg Mudarris Zadah.*

Elder brother of Jamil Nuri. Superintendent of the Government press under the Turkish régime. Joined the Amir Feisal in Syria, and was with him in London in 1920. Was in Cairo at the time of the conference, March 1921, and returned to Bagdad with the High Commissioner; probably sent by Feisal. He helped with the preparations for his arrival, and was appointed an honorary Chamberlain, and, on the King's accession, head Chamberlain. He was, however, disappointed at not having been given the post of Minister of Education, to which he aspired, but for which he is totally unfitted. In close touch with the extreme Nationalists, and, on the 23rd August, 1922, introduced the representatives of the two Nationalist parties at the King's Levee, and was said to have obtained permission for them to address the crowd from the King's balcony. He was certainly present, but it is probable that his name was used in this instance to shield others. The High Commissioner demanded his instant dismissal; which was done immediately. He retired into obscurity. His Majesty at first made him an allowance, but on the reduction of the Civil List discontinued it together with that of others. In June 1924 he was appointed rector of the University of Al-al-Bait, and will wreck any possibility of its serving a useful end. Still held this post at the beginning of 1930, but had for some time taken no part in politics. Lost his appointment on the abolition of the Al-al-Bait Theological College in 1930, and has since contributed frequent articles to the extremist press attacking Nuri Pasha's Cabinet and their policy. In March 1932 he was expelled from Bagdad to Arbil under Section 40 of the Tribal Civil and Criminal Disputes Regulations. The action was taken against him because of his violent criticism of Nuri Pasha's Government in a series of articles which he published in Raphael Butti's daily newspaper, the *Akhbar*. Permitted to return to Bagdad about the middle of April.

28. *Faiq-bin-Abdul Razzaq-al-Munir.*

Sunni of Bagdad. His father was, during the war, well known as an agent of Ajaimi. Faiq returned to Bagdad from Aleppo in March 1919. In March 1920 he applied for a passport to join his father, who was in Syria. He was, however, arrested at Albu Kamal, the situation on the Euphrates being very difficult. Subsequently released and returned to Bagdad. He was actively engaged in Nationalist propaganda during Ramadan, 1920. Left Bagdad secretly when Government took action against the Nationalists in August. He returned to Bagdad in June 1921. A useless fellow; would sell his soul for an appointment or a drink. Member of the first Parliament, but not re-elected in 1929 general election.

29. *Fakhri-al-din-Jamil Zadah.*

Sunni of Bagdad. Born 1879. Since the death of his cousin, Abdul Rahman, in 1919, he is the head of one of the most distinguished families of Bagdad. They have large estates on the Tigris and Khalis. Related to the Umari of Mosul. Fakhri's father, who was President of the Board of Public Instruction, had a great reputation. Fakhri is a moderate Nationalist, but he is a man of no moral



courage; his opinions flicker in the wind of his fears. He was appointed Minister without portfolio in the Naqib's Provisional Government in November 1920, an office which he held till the termination of the Provisional Government on the King's coronation in September 1921. He was piqued at not receiving Cabinet office in the next Government. In July 1922 he took a leading part in forming the Hizb-al-Hurr, under the presidency of Sayyid Mahmud Gilani, and remained with it until its collapse in 1924. He was consistently against the treaty of 1922, but was reduced to such a state of abject terror by the intimidation of the lawyer group (see Ali Mahmud), that he did not attend when the final vote was taken, and immediately afterwards removed himself into the safe retreat of the Lebanon. Member of Parliament. Kept in touch with Jafar-al-Askari in the hope that, should Jafar be called upon to form a Cabinet, he might have a chance of a seat in it. Finding Jafar Pasha unlikely to return, he attached himself to Yasin Pasha and the Hizb-al-Shab. Senator 1927.

30. *Dr. Faiq Shakir.*

Became Deputy in the elections of 1930, and supported Nuri Pasha's Cabinet vigorously. Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs, November 1931.

31. *Faris Agha.*

Chieftain of the Zibar tribe (Kurds), who lives at Huki in the Aqra district. From the time of the British occupation of the Mosul liwa in 1918-19 until 1923, he has a stormy record of hostility towards the authority of the Government. Since 1923 he has been quieter, though he and his tribesmen are always a perpetual danger to the peace of the Aqra district, and the local authorities have little real authority among his villages. He has an old feud with Ahmad of Barzan, whose territory lies adjacent to that of Faris on the opposite side of the Greater Zab River.

32. *Haji Kadhim Hashimoff.*

Russian subject by origin (now Persian subject). Born at Kadhimain about 1877. Moslem (Shiah). Originally from Baku, where his father (Hashim) is still living. Has had trade relations with Russia since the time of his ancestors and deals chiefly in skins. Also trades in other Russian goods, such as matches, piece-goods, samovars, glass and hardware. He came into prominence about 1928, when he was found to be dealing with Soviet merchants. Has trade agents in Persia, and has visited Resht and Moscow a few times for commercial reasons. Obtained his Persian passport for the second time from Persia in order to return to Iraq from Russia about two years ago (1929). When he returned he brought letters from Russia to Russian trade merchants in Iraq. On his return established connexion with the Russian commercial agents at Mohammerah. Visited Basra during the early part of 1931 and interviewed the Russian trade agent, who had come down from Mohammerah with the object of obtaining the Sharq Agency in Iraq. Beyond arranging the export of his skins by Russian ships, he had no success. He favours the Russian Government, calling them the supporters of the weak, and declares Russia to be England's worst enemy. Has lately (about 1931) been taking an interest in Iraqi politics. Is supposed to have given a large amount of money to the Hizb-al-Watani under an anonymous name. Organised a political meeting in his house during September 1931, which was declared to be against the King and in favour of a republic. Has three sons, Hashim, Jawad and Abdul Amir. Is a well-to-do trader. Has taken a keen interest in all Russian traders. While at Moscow gave a letter of recommendation, addressed to his son Jawad, to one Meshedi Abbas Mahmud Zade, a Russian Tartar of Baku, who arrived in Bagdad in April 1930, and whose funds come from the Bolsheviks. Also was sent by his son Jawad letters of a secret nature written by Jafar Abu Timman and Mohammad-as-Sadr, with a view to establishing commercial and other relations with the Soviet.

33. *Hamdi-bin-Abdul Wahab-bin-Haji Mahmud Pachahji.*

Sunni of Bagdad. A great-nephew of Abdul Rahman, professor of the faculty of law. Held the post of Kaimakam of Kadhimain. He studied for four years at Constantinople, political economy and finance. He was one of the first organisers of the Ahd in Bagdad in 1913, in conjunction with Nuri Pasha, Jafar

Abu Timman and others. He was at one time held in much esteem by the advanced party of young Bagdadis, and was a strong advocate of an Amirate under the son of the Sharif. He signed the petition from the Majlis of January 1919 asking for Islamic government. In 1920 he was in ill-health and took no part in the independence movement. In February 1921 there was a proposal that he should be appointed Kaimakam of Kadhimain, but he wrote to the Istiqlal and declared his firm intention not to accept office under the Provisional Government. Took part in a successful attempt to give an anti-British flavour to the Bagdad voting papers in the plebiscite in the anti-mandate agitation of 1922. Elected one of eight representatives of the people to protest to the King against the mandate after an abortive meeting in the Haidar Khana Mosqua which had been stopped by His Majesty's order, June 1922. Arrested on the 25th August as a leading member of the Hizb-al-Watani after the anti-mandate demonstration organised by the two extremist parties at the King's Levee on the 23rd August. Interned in Henjam; returned in April 1923 on a guarantee that he would refrain from politics, in spite of which he worked surreptitiously against the elections in accordance with the Shiah mandate. He was nominated member of the Central Electoral Committee (Diwan-al-Intikhab), but refused to serve. Topped the poll as a secondary elector in four mahallahs. Clever, shallow, unstable, idle; a strong pan-Arab with, until recently, a hatred of all foreign control or advice. Personally attractive with pleasant manners. Speaks a little French. Has now changed a good deal, and takes a more moderate view. He apparently realises the necessity for British assistance, and voted for the ratification of the 1926 treaty. Was one of the original concessionnaires of the Asfar Concession. Has sat in the Chamber since 1925 and once held portfolio of Auqaf. Lost his seat in general election of 1930. Not at present active in politics.

34. *Hanna Khaiyat.*

Syrian Catholic of Mosul. About 48. Medical diploma at Beirut and Paris, much medical and administrative experience and extremely able on both sides. Head of the Mosul Hospital under the Government of Occupation. Appointed Minister of Health 1921. When the Ministry was abolished in 1922 he accepted the post of Director of Medical Services. Speaks excellent French. Appointed Director-General in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs October 1931. Appointed Inspector-General of Health in 1933.

35. *Hikmat Bey Ibn Suleiman.*

Sunni. Brother of Murad Bey and of Mahmud Shaikat Pasha (formerly Grand Wazir), both now dead. Director of Education in Bagdad under the Turks. Also Assistant Governor. Member of the Committee of Union and Progress. Was in Constantinople at the time of the occupation. Came back in January 1921, and was a candidate for the Ministry of Education. He was made Director of Posts in April 1922, and Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs in April 1923. Is well-mannered, cynical, frequents pro-Turkish circles, and for that reason is looked on somewhat askance by pan-Arabs, but is probably not himself one who desires the return of the Turks, at least so long as he holds office under an Arab Government. Holds rather aloof, but is friendly with such Europeans as he knows and a friend of Jafar and Nuri Pasha. He was chosen in March 1924 to replace Sabih Bey at the Koweit Conference, but owing to its breaking-up on the receipt of the news of Ibn Dawish's raid, he never got there. Minister of Interior in the Second Sadun Cabinet, and resigned his post as Director of Posts and Telegraphs. Has since then been a Deputy and a member of the Taqaddum party. Was devoted to Muhsin-al-Sadun. Lost his seat in the general election of 1930 and seems to have passed out of public life. Became Minister for Interior in March 1933. Resigned from the Cabinet with Rashid Ali in October 1933 and from the Chamber in November 1933.

36. *Husain Afnan Saiyid.*

Grandson on the maternal side of Baha Ullah, the Persian reformer. Born at Acre, educated at the Quaker School at Brumana, the American College, Beirut, and Cambridge where he graduated. Freethinker, but very proud of his grandfather. Egyptian subject. Was employed as a clerk in the Prisoners of War Camp at Samarpur. In 1919 was given a post in the Vernacular Department of



the Civil Commissioner's Office, but resigned after two or three months having been offered a lucrative job by Muhammad Shahbandar. Left him in July 1920 with the intention of starting a moderate paper. He was on the committee of the Ahliyah School, but resigned when it became definitely a political club. Excellent Arabist, speaks very good English. A man of ability. Editor of the vernacular paper the *Sharq*, which began publication on the 1st September, 1920, but was obliged to throw up what promised to be a successful enterprise on his appointment as secretary to the Council of Ministers in November. He is the object of ill-concealed dislike on the part of the Shiah on account of his being by birth a Bahai heretic. Married in 1923 a niece of Sata Beg, an exceptionally well-educated girl of advanced views. Her father, who was Mutessarif of Muntafiq, was murdered at Saiyid Talib's order. Yasin Pasha, when Prime Minister, dismissed him from his post while absent on leave. He then took up commerce in partnership with Shafiq Haddad, but failed. In 1928 appointed "chef du protocol," and in January 1930 secretary to the Iraqi Legation in London. The active Nationalists constantly intrigue and work against Afnan, who is in reality quite honest and well-meaning. Transferred in September 1932 as secretary to Legation at Angora, but the post was abolished soon after his appointment to it.

### 37. Husain-al-Naini (Mirza).

A leading Shiah divine (mujtahid) of Najaf. Like most of the mujtahids, he has latterly kept clear of political entanglements.

### 38. Ibrahim Hilmi-al-Umar.

Sunni of Bagdad; about 34. Clever writer. Before the war editor of Suleiman-al-Dakhil's paper the *Riyadh*, and director of the *Nidha*, Muzahim Pachahji's paper. Wrote an article against the Vali, Jawid Pasha, and was deported to Damascus, but was retained in Mosul by the Vali, Suleiman Nadhif, with whom he had found favour. Returned to Bagdad with Suleiman Nadhif when the latter became Vali. Engaged in Nationalist propaganda and was deported to Syria. On the occupation of Syria started, at Colonel Lawrence's suggestion, the *Lisan-al-Arab*, a subsidised pro-British paper. Ibrahim was imprisoned after the British evacuated Syria, but on being let out restarted his paper with eulogies of the French for having put an end to Arab Government and violently anti-British articles. Came back to Bagdad in 1921 and started the *Lisan-al-Arab* on pro-Feisal and pro-British lines. Sheikh Mahdi-al-Khalisi issued a fatwah forbidding the Faithful to read it on account of a harmless article about the Bahais. Under this it perished, but its place was immediately filled (April 1922) by a successor under the name of the *Mufid*. Ibrahim Hilmi had, however, taken warning from his experience, and the *Mufid* was conducted in strict obedience to the views of the mujtahids. Its pages were filled with madbatahs against the mandate, and it published on the 24th August, 1922, the manifestos of the two extremist parties which were little less than an incitement to rebellion. Ibrahim Hilmi evaded arrest and made his way to Persia, where he joined Sayyid Muhammad Sadr and published violent attacks on the British in the local press. Returned in March 1923, and was permitted by the Prime Minister to accompany the King as special correspondent on His Majesty's tour to Basra and Hillah in June 1923. In October, when the *Amal* was started by Maruf-al-Rasafi, he was allowed to take the post of sub-editor, and he was given permission to restart the *Mufid* in May 1924. It appeared as Jafar Pasha's organ and was strongly pro-treaty. Ibrahim Hilmi is a thoroughly worthless and contemptible character, who will do anything (or anybody) for money or drink.

### 39. Ibrahim Kamal-bin-Ahmed Mukhtar.

Sunni. Captain in the Shereefian army. A very good officer in the field, where he commanded a battalion. Wounded at the first battle of Maan. Legal officer to O.C., Damascus, under Feisal's régime. Came to Iraq with Jamil-al-Madfa'i in 1919 making propaganda for the Shereefians. Was afterwards at Dair, but not known to have participated in the attack on Tall Afar. He was in Damascus in April 1921, but subsequently returned to Iraq, and was said to be engaged in inciting people against any form of British control. Was appointed commandant of police, Bagdad, on the resignation of Abdul Latif Felahi. He did well in some ways and kept excellent discipline, but was removed after

innumerable complaints of various kinds. After leaving the police he took up the legal profession. Entered Parliament as a Nationalist, but later gave up politics for a well-paid and influential post in the Ministry of Finance. Since then he has given no trouble.

### 40. Ibrahim Saleh Shukur-bin-Ahmed.

Iraqi by birth. Born in Bagdad about 1892. Residing in Mohalla Qahwat Shukur. Moslem (Sunni). Ex-member of the Ithilaf (*Entente*) party, and keen supporter of pan-Arab organisation under the Turks before the war. Was in Syria during the war. Arabic scholar and learned in theology. Notorious critic of Government, professed anti-King and anti-British. Published his own paper, the *Zaman*, which had to be closed (about 1926) for anti-Government articles (half a dozen times). Having fallen out with the Iraqi Government, went over to Nejd, and declared that he had severed his connexion with Iraq and Iraqis. During his temporary emigration he visited Syria and started the newspaper the *Furat*, but was not successful. Turned coat and reappeared in Iraq after the fall of the Cabinet in 1928. Took a leading part during the demonstrations against Sir Alfred Mond, when he visited Iraq (1928). Tried his best to be M.P. at elections, but failed. For some time was almost penniless. Is said to be now practising blackmail (1931). Took up appointment as Mudir Nahiya and Mudir Tahrirat in Diyala Liwa in Qizil Rubat, and later in Bagdad Liwa. This appointment was offered by Government to keep him quiet. He later arose against the Government, quoting instances of maladministration during the short period in which he was in a Government appointment. No love is lost between him and the notables of Bagdad. Prosecuted by Muzahim Beg Al Pachachi for defamation in an article against him written for the newspaper *Amani* and published on the 30th October, 1931. Tried by the district magistrate, who found him guilty and sentenced him on the 15th November, 1931, to one year rigorous imprisonment, together with one Abdul Razzaq-al-Shabib, who was sentenced to six months' rigorous imprisonment. Both appealed against their sentences. On appeal Ibrahim's sentence was reduced to six months' rigorous imprisonment and that of Abdul Razzaq to two months' rigorous imprisonment. They applied for revision on the 29th November, 1931, and the revision court reduced Ibrahim's sentence to two months' rigorous imprisonment in December 1931. Was released on the 7th January, 1932. Lying seriously ill in his house early 1932. Recovered and was reappointed to the public service as mudir; promoted Kaimakam September 1933.

### 41. Jafar Pasha Al Askari.

Major-General; Bagdadi, son of a mukhtar; born 1885; studied in Turkish Military School and Staff College, and also in Berlin; served in Turkish, German armies, and with the Senussi in 1916. He was taken prisoner by the Dorset Yeomanry while with the Senussi; changed his allegiance and joined the Arab army under the Emir Feisal. Active service: Balkans, Yemen, Mesopotamia, Dardanelles, Libya and Arabia; speaks Arabic, Turkish, Kurdish, Armenian, Persian, German, French and English. Of unwieldy physique, he is by nature moody, honest, well-meaning and good tempered, though too lethargic to face the truth when it is unpleasant; inclined to take the line of least resistance and hope for the best. Has no aptitude for intrigue and is easily hoodwinked; is a good speaker; a fine tactician (no strategist), brave and alert in battle. G.O.C., Arab army, 1917-18; decorations: C.M.G., D.S.O., Iron Cross (1st Class), Croix de Guerre (Palms), Legion of Honour (officer), Osmanieh, Majidieh, Ordre pour le Mérite (Turk), Nadhahal Arab (1st Class). Military Governor of Aleppo till beginning of 1920. Then military member of Feisal's Council of Advisers in Damascus; was a member of the convention which elected Emir Abdullah King of Iraq in March 1920. Returned to Bagdad October 1920. Minister of Defence in the Naqib's Provisional Government October 1920-September 1921. Attended the Cairo Conference March 1921. Minister of Defence under King Feisal till November 1922, when, prior to the dissolution of the Naqib's second Cabinet, he left for London to attend the Lausanne Conference, and held no office in the Cabinet headed by Muhsin Beg, with whom he was not on the best of terms. Remained in London as the King's personal representative, and while there began to read for the Bar. He was called in 1931. Returned to Bagdad in September 1923, and in November was persuaded to accept the post of Mutessarif of Mosul.



He was made O.C. of the Iraq army in Mosul in addition to his civil duties. In November, on the resignation of Muhsin Beg, became Prime Minister. Member of the Constituent Assembly March 1924, sitting for Diyala. He and his Cabinet accomplished the ratification of the treaty and resigned on the dissolution of the Assembly in July 1924. Elected Deputy for Bagdad, but resigned, and became the Iraq diplomatic representative in London. Recalled in November 1926 by His Majesty to form a Government on the resignation of Abdul Muhsin Beg's Cabinet. Proved incapable of controlling the discordant elements of which his Cabinet was composed, and resigned in January 1928. At Council meetings he was a cypher, and only kept his Cabinet together by giving way to any Minister whose support he wished to retain. He was then appointed Iraqi Minister in London. Recalled in 1930 to go to Tehran as Iraq's first Minister Plenipotentiary at the Imperial Court. Did not take up this post, but became instead Minister for Defence in Nuri Pasha's Cabinet in March 1930. Elected President of Chamber November 1930, resigned December 1930 and early in 1931 was reappointed Iraqi Minister in London. Recalled to Bagdad October 1931 and appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence in Nuri Pasha's Cabinet. Prefers London to all other cities, and has many friends in the British army. Returned as Iraqi Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of St. James December 1932. Received G.C.V.O. during King Feisal's State visit to London in the summer of 1933.

#### 42. *Jafar Ataifah, Sayyid.*

Shiah of Kadhmain, of Arab birth. Rais Baladiyah of the town in Turkish times and after the occupation. A very rich landowner. He was one of the Haiyat Muslihah (Conciliatory party) sent to Najaf by the Turks after the trouble there of April-May 1915. Friendly, hospitable, pro-British. He led the movement for the presentation of a madhbatah in favour of British protection in January 1919, and remained staunch through the troubles of 1920 though often in great trepidation. His personal popularity stood him in good stead, and his loyalty to the British did him no harm, since in 1922, when a mayor was chosen by election, he headed the poll. He was still mayor in 1930. Forced to resign in February 1932 and was succeeded by a palace nominee, Mahmud Astarabadi. Is now bitter because he was not helped to keep his post by the Residency.

#### 43. *Jafar Chalabi Hafidh-al-Haji Daud, Abu Timman.*

Shiah of Bagdad. Well-educated, with a good deal of influence, age about 40. He was president of the Mahometan Relief Committee under the Turks, and under British administration a member of the municipal council and Shiah member of the Education Committee. Intelligent and alert. His father, Muhammad Hasan, is still alive, but Jafar Chalabi is the most important member of the Haji Daud family. A good man of business, with a sense of humour, but verbose. He belongs to the most advanced group of Bagdadis, was one of the first to be enrolled in the Ahd in 1913, took an active part in the propaganda which led to the presentation of a petition asking for Islamic Government, the 22nd January, 1919, and himself signed the document. Was in Persia during the summer of 1919, and returned to Bagdad in October. During the winter he was in active co-operation with the Nationalist party and formed with Yussuf Suwaidi, Muhammad Sadr, Sheikh Ahmad Daud and Ali Bazirgar the centre of the independence movement of 1920. He was on the committee of the Ahliyah School, founded in January, and one of the principal promoters of Mauluds. He was one of the self-chosen representatives of Bagdad, the Mandubin, who presented a request for independence in June 1920. Actively engaged in inciting the tribes to rebellion. He evaded an attempted arrest in August 1920 and fled from Bagdad to Najaf. Returned in September 1921 and was energetic in promoting all extreme Nationalist movements, especially the anti-mandate agitation. Minister of Commerce from April 1922 till the end of June, when he resigned after a prolonged opposition to the terms of the treaty. His post was about to be abolished by the Economics Committee, but by his resignation he gained the kudos of voluntary disappearance in protest against the policy of the Cabinet. He then went into violent opposition. He organised the formation of the Hizb-al-Watani, of which he was secretary, and together with the leaders of the Hizb-al-Nadhah engineered the anti-mandate demonstration at the King's levee on the 23rd August. He was arrested on the 25th April and deported to

Henjam, where he remained till May 1923. His return to Bagdad was not greeted with any demonstrations, and he relapsed into private life. He was nominated in August a member of the Central Electoral Committee (Diwan-al-Intikhab), but refused to serve, and though chosen as a secondary elector he was at the bottom of the poll among those elected. Refused to associate in the revived Hizb-al-Nadhah. Returned to politics on his election to the Chamber in a Bagdad by-election June 1928. Reformed the Hizb-al-Watani (Nationalist party) September 1928. Telegraphed congratulations to the Labour party on their success in the general election in England in 1929. Lost his seat in the Chamber in the election of 1930, but remains active as the secretary-general of the Nationalist party. Resigned from the Nationalist party in October 1933, declaring that he was withdrawing from politics until there should be a change of heart among those in public life.

#### 44. *Jallal Beg Baban.*

Kurd of the Baban family. Age about 45.

In early days of British occupation he was actively associated with extreme Nationalists and was deported to Henjam in 1920. Released in 1921. Appointed kaimakam in 1923 and continued to serve in the civil administration, holding the posts of mutessarif in Nasiriyah, Karbala and Arbil until November 1932, when he became Minister for Economics and Communications in Naji Shaukat's Cabinet. Became Minister for Defence under Rashid Ali-al-Gilani in March 1933. Resigned with the latter in October 1933.

#### 45. *Jamal Baban.*

A Kurdish lawyer (about 38 years of age). Served for some time as a judge in the Northern Liwas. Became Deputy for Arbil in the general election of 1928. Appointed Minister for Justice in Nuri Pasha's Cabinet March 1930. Resigned with Nuri Pasha in October 1932. Reappointed Minister for Justice in Jamil Madfai's Cabinet in November 1933. Owes his continued presence in successive Cabinets perhaps more to the tradition that each Cabinet must have one Kurd than to his personal abilities.

#### 46. *Jamil Rawi.*

A Bagdadi; officer in the Turkish army. Served in the Shereefian forces during the Arab revolt. Chief aide-de-camp to King Ali in Jedda, and came to Iraq with His Majesty after Ibn Saud's conquest of the Hejaz. Protégé of the palace. Elected Deputy for Dulaim in the general election of 1928, became vice-president of the Taqaddum party and Vice-President of the Chamber of Deputies. Minister for Communications and Works in Nuri Pasha's Cabinet formed in March 1930. Became Minister for Defence in January 1931, but lost his portfolio when Nuri Pasha reformed his Cabinet in October 1931. Appointed Mutessarif of Kirkuk July 1932.

#### 47. *Jamil-bin-Muhammad Agha Al Nainawi (Jamil Madfai).*

Of Mosul. Led the party which in June 1920 came from Dair and called upon the tribes to rise against the British in the name of the Shereef. Entered Tall Afar after the murder of Captain Stuart, which he had instigated. Styled himself leader of the Northern Mesopotamian army. On the approach of British troops from Mosul returned to Dair. Returned to Iraq 1923. Soon after, appointed mutessarif and saw service in a number of different liwas. His early record as an official is not satisfactory, but latterly he has given no cause for complaint. Appointed Minister for the Interior under Nuri Pasha in March 1931. Became President of the Chamber in December 1930, following Jafar Pasha's resignation. Resigned October 1931, at the same time resigning from Nuri Pasha's party as a protest against the high-handed actions of Muzahim Beg Al Pachachi, then Minister for the Interior. Composed his quarrel with Nuri Pasha in November and was re-elected President of the Chamber on the 30th November. Again elected President in November 1932 and March 1933. Became Prime Minister in November 1933.

Although a very competent soldier he is entirely lacking in administrative ability and is a mere figurehead in the political world. Is generally popular because he expresses his opinions in an honest, downright manner.



48. *Jamil Beg Al Wadi.*

Sunni of Bagdad. Brother of Hamid-al-Wadi, aide-de-camp to the Amir Abdullah, and Shakir-al-Wadi, aide-de-camp to King Feisal.

Appointed a judge in 1923 and became director of the Land Registry Department (Tapu) in 1931.

Appointed Minister for Justice November 1932. Resigned with Cabinet in March 1933. Appointed Director-General of State Domains Lands (in the Ministry of Finance) October 1933.

49. *Kadhim Dujaili, Sheikh.*

Shiah of Bagdad. The family is of tribal origin and comes from the Dujail Canal. Kadhim is a man of considerable literary gifts, and before the war helped Père Anastase in the editorship of the *Lughat-al-Arab*. Not in Turkish favour. He fled to Basra. In the early days of the occupation of Basra he was employed in the police there and at Nasiriyah. Brought up to Bagdad shortly after the occupation of that town and given similar employment. Dismissed on account of instances of brutality. At the end of 1918 he was sent down secretly to Najaf by the advanced party of young Bagdadis to advocate the appointment of an Arab ruler with the minimum of British control. Posed as a Government agent. His doings became known, and he was returned to Bagdad, where he was imprisoned on a charge of false pretences. After his release he expressed regret for the line he had taken and disgust at the treatment he had received from his Nationalist friends. He took no part in the Nationalist movement of 1920. Later seemed completely to have abandoned politics, and in the autumn of 1923 went to London as a teacher in the School of Oriental Languages. Holds views singularly advanced for a shiah; sent his daughters to the Latin School. In autumn 1929 resigned post in School of Oriental Languages and returned to Bagdad. Appointed supervisor of Iraqi students in England October 1931. Became Iraqi consul at Mohammerah in summer of 1933.

50. *Kamil Chadirchi-bin-Rafaat Chadirchi.*

Iraqi by birth. Born in Bagdad about 1901. Residing in Jadid Hassan Pasha, Bagdad. Moslem (Sunni). First cousin to Rauf Beg Chadirchi (*q.v.*). Member of Parliament for a few days. Formerly personal assistant to the Minister of Finance. Now farming his own land. Is temporarily the responsible Director of the Nationalist paper *Al-Ikha-al-Watani*. Is said to be anti-King and against the present régime. Is related to Mahmud Subhi Beg Al Daftari, who was the Amin-al-Asimah (Mayor of Bagdad) until 1931, and who has married his sister. Is a member of the Hizb-al-Ikha (Brotherhood party) and also takes an interest in the Hizb-al-Watani (Nationalist party). Very much perturbed by the receipt of the widely distributed and locally notorious anonymous letters with regard to the conduct of his sister (Mahmud Subhi's wife) in connexion with her repeated visits (as alleged in the letters) to "Harthiyah" (King Feisal's estate). Prosecuted several times by the Government for articles of anti-Government nature in the paper of which he is the responsible editor (*i.e.*, the *Akhbar*). Always acquitted, excepting once, when he was sentenced to one month's rigorous imprisonment on the 15th November, 1931, for an article entitled: "Mosque and Sacred Shrines." Sentenced by the district magistrate, Bagdad. The execution of the sentence was, however, suspended, as he was released on his personal security for good behaviour for five years. He lodged an appeal and was acquitted in December 1931.

51. *Khalid Suleiman.*

Brother of Hikmat Suleiman (*q.v.*). Age about 50. Returned from Constantinople, where he had spent most of his life in commerce, in 1926. Was Minister for Education under Taufiq Suwaidi in April 1929. In the reshuffle of portfolios which followed Abdul Muhsin Beg's suicide in November 1929, Khalid Beg was made Minister for Irrigation and Agriculture under Naji Pasha Suwaida. A pleasant, honest and likeable man, but has no influence in politics. Appointed Director-General, Public Works Department, January 1932.

52. *Khalil Zaki.*

Born in Kirkuk of Kirkukli parents. Served in the Turkish army and became a cavalry captain in 1906. Also saw service on the General Staff. Joined

Iraqi army in 1921 and reached the rank of zaim (brigadier-general) in 1928. Has passed junior officers' course and cavalry course. Officer Commanding Northern District 1927-30. Officer Commanding Southern District 1930-31. Officer Commanding Eastern District 1931-33. Reputed to Southern District December 1933.

A good officer and firm disciplinarian. Generally liked by the British officers of the military mission.

53. *Khushaba, Malik.*

Assyrian chieftain of the Lower Tiari tribe, aged about 55. Presbyterian, and generally in disagreement with Mar Shimun. Well educated by American missionaries at Urumia. A striking personality with a romantic record as fighter and leader. Supported the Iraqi Government in their efforts to settle the Assyrians satisfactorily in Iraq and thereby incurred the bitter enmity of Mar Shimun. Many of his followers were, however, quite innocently massacred in August 1933 in spite of their friendly attitude towards the Iraqi Government. With most Assyrians he now (1933) desires to leave Iraq, but does not wish to be resettled in the same place as Mar Shimun.

54. *Mahmud Ramzi.*

Sunni, age 45. Studied at Bagdad and later went to Constantinople, where he obtained a commission in the Turkish army. Served for nearly twenty years and reached the rank of Binbashi. During a period of his service he was Mamur Sanniyah of Abu Ghurain, where he earned considerable unpopularity. Anti-British, joined whole-heartedly in the disturbances of 1920. Accompanied Yussuf Suwaidi when he fled from Bagdad, and was actively engaged in stirring up the tribes on the Yusufiyah. Still anti-British. Although recognised as a rabid Nationalist, his name has practically always cropped up in pro-Turkish intrigue and scheme. Has been a Deputy in the Chamber since 1925, where he is a prominent member of the Nationalist Opposition. Lost his seat in the Chamber in the general election of 1930. Continues to work with the National party (Hizb-al-Watani).

55. *Mahmud Subhi Daftari.*

Sunni of Bagdad, son of the late Fuad Effendi, lawyer. Aged about 38. An advocate. Went with his father to Constantinople on the occupation and returned in 1919. Strong Nationalist with a sentimental leaning towards Turkey. Good manners, full of talk, but knows no European language. Belongs to the Nationalist group in Bagdad. He was arrested in August 1920, in connexion with the plots concocted in the Nationalist school, but released on the intercession of the Naqib. Rearrested about a week later, and, with his father and uncle, Rifat Chadirji, sent to Constantinople, whence he returned in 1921. Has sat in the Chamber of Deputies since its beginning, where he acts with Yasin Pasha's group. Pleasant and seemingly honest and well intentioned. Appointed Amin-al-Asimah in April 1930 and did not stand for Parliament in the 1930 elections. Noticeably more moderate in politics than in his earlier days, and no longer works with the Nationalist groups. Dismissed from his appointment by Muzahim Pachachi (Minister of Interior) in September 1931. Appointed Principal of the Law School November 1931, but resigned immediately after his appointment. Has a bitter spite against Muzahim Pachachi (*q.v.*). Appointed Director-General of Tapu December 1932. Amin-al-Asimah (Mayor of Bagdad) October 1933.

56. *Mahrut-bin-Hadhdhal, Sheikh.*

Chief of the Amarat, Anaiza (Arab) tribe of Iraq. He succeeded his father in 1927 and is about 37 years of age (1933). Intensely proud, but wiser than he appears. He has endeavoured to maintain good relations with the Iraqi Government, though the Nationalist element in Bagdad regard him with some suspicion on account of his father's close friendship with the British. His tribal area is from the Euphrates southwards to the Nejd border.



57. *Mahmud, Sheikh.*

Of the family of Barzinja Sayyidis. He has inherited from his father and grandfather great tribal and religious influence throughout Southern Kurdistan. He was made Hukumdar of Suleimani in 1918, shortly after the British occupation. In June 1919 he revolted against British authority, was wounded and deported to Henjam Island in the Persian Gulf. He was reinstalled as Hukumdar of Suleimani in 1922, after the Turks had forced the British political officers there to withdraw. In 1923 armed action had to be taken against him to check his endeavours to establish his influence in the Kirkuk and Arbil Provinces. Suleimani was reoccupied in 1924, but Sheikh Mahmud was not brought to terms until 1927. These were that he was to abstain from politics and live outside Iraq in one of his Persian villages close to the border. He chose Piran and stayed there quietly until 1930, when an outbreak of Kurdish Nationalist feeling in Suleimani again tempted him into the political arena. Air and ground forces had again to be sent against him, and on the 31st May he surrendered at Panjwin. He was granted an allowance and sent to live at Hilla. From there he was later removed to Ramadi, and in the summer of 1933 he was permitted to take a house in Bagdad. He receives an allowance of 900 rupees per mensem from the Iraq Government. He has three sons, Rauf, Baba Ali and Latif. Rauf is quiet and industrious and lives in Suleimani. Baba Ali, after completing his secondary schooling at Victoria College in Alexandria, has been sent to Columbia University, New York, to study political economy. Latif is the pet of his father, and will follow closely in his footsteps, if he has a chance to do so.

58. *Mar Shimun.*

Eshai, Mar Shimun, Patriarch of the Assyrians (Catholikos of the Church in the East).

Succeeded to the patriarchate in 1920 when a child; now about 25 years of age. Educated in England at a seminary in Canterbury. Since coming of age and assuming the authority of his position, Mar Shimun has actively fostered discontent among the Assyrians. Whatever his position as the head of a spiritual community, his temporal authority is not acknowledged by a large number of Assyrians, estimated at a maximum at 12,000. His aim has been to establish the whole community in a compact enclave under his own spiritual and temporal authority. He was the inspirer of the mutiny of the levies in 1932 and of the exodus to Syria in 1933. Deported by the Iraq Government in the summer of 1933, he was given an asylum in Cyprus, where his father David and his aunt Surma joined him. In October 1933 he went to Geneva to protest to the League of Nations against the massacre of Assyrians which followed the Assyrian attack on the Iraq army at Dairabun (Faishkhabur) in August 1933, and in November went to England to obtain support from friends and sympathisers there. On his deportation King Feisal granted him and his family a provisional allowance of £780 a year, subject to his correct behaviour. Since his father's death, King Ghazi has continued to pay this allowance from his private resources.

While paying lip service to the League of Nations and always ready to petition that body on behalf of the Assyrians, he has proved disloyal to its decisions whenever they have conflicted with his personal ambition. By preferring temporal power to spiritual leadership, he has been the means of inflicting much needless suffering on a deserving people.

59. *Maulud Pasha Al Mukhlis.*

Sunni. His mother was a tribeswoman of the Ubaid and his father a small shopkeeper of Mosul. Fine soldier; he behaved with great gallantry with the Shereefian army and was badly wounded in the leg. His exploits do not lose in the telling. Served in Syria and was sent in 1920 to Dair, where the agreement between the British Government of Occupation and the Arab Government was reached under his auspices in April. A hot Nationalist. His version of the story is that he drove the British out of Dair-az-Zor. He continued to spread anti-British propaganda among the tribes until he was recalled by Feisal in June. He remained in Syria after the fall of the Arab Government and returned to Bagdad in July 1921. He lost no time in joining the extreme Nationalist group. There was no post to offer him in the Iraq army, but he was given some land near Tikrit and settled down to cultivate it, with occasional visits to Bagdad and Mosul to

take part in Nationalist activities. Early in 1923 he spent several months in the nursing home in Bagdad, being again troubled with the wound in his leg; although given every care and attention by doctors and nursing staff, he did not express much gratitude for what had been done for him. In May 1923 he was appointed Mutessarif of Karbala, to deal with the ulema whom Ali Jaudat had failed to persuade. He is no administrator, but he kept things quiet at the time of the exodus of the mujtahids. He continues, however, to be in close touch with the extremists. A thick-headed, impulsive man, who allows his anti-British sentiment to more or less rule his actions. Has been a Senator since 1925.

60. *Muhammad Amin Zaki Beg.*

Formerly Staff Officer in Turkish army. Up to 1926 held important post in Iraq army. Was made Minister for Communications and Works in the Coalition Cabinet formed under Jafar Pasha in November 1926. Has since then held the portfolio of Education, Defence and, again, Communications and Works. He is a Kurd of Suleimani, about 50 years of age. Well educated, speaks French, English and a little German and Russian, but he carries little weight in the Cabinets in which he holds office. His policy is to try to please the Kurds by supporting Kurdish Nationalists, while avoiding compromising his position with the Arabs by going too far. Lost his seat in the Chamber in the general election of 1930. Has a pension, and is quietly awaiting what the future may hold for him. Is preparing a history of the Kurds in Kurdish. Minister of Economics and Communications July 1931. Resigned October 1933 with Nuri Pasha. Appointed Director-General of Economics and Communications March 1933, in which post he was a conspicuous failure. Temporarily unemployed owing to ill-health.

61. *Muhammad-al-Isfahani, Sayyid.*

The most influential of the Shiah divines (mujtahids) of Najaf. Avoids political entanglements.

62. *Muhammad Salih-al-Qazzaz.*

Bagdad mechanic, aged about 35 (1933). Has recently come into prominence as a labour leader and agitator. A professional demagogue, he always thrusts himself in the van of any bazaar troubles, and has been especially conspicuous in encouraging discontent among the labour employed by the foreign companies operating in Iraq. Played a leading part in organising the boycott of the Bagdad Electric Light Company in the autumn and winter of 1933.

63. *Muhammad-bin-Hasan-al-Sadr, Sayyid.*

Aged 43. One of the most important, active and influential of the political Shiah Ulema. He signed the anti-British madhbatah in January 1919. Leapt into importance in 1920. With Yussuf Suwaidi took a leading part in the agitation during Ramadan 1920, the marked feature of which was the reconciliation of Sunnis and Shiahs. Attended the Mauluds in the mosques accompanied by large bodies of followers. He was a member of the Arab Nationalist Committee who presented a petition in favour of independence, and was selected as one of the four who should go on deputation to London (the others being Yussuf Suwaidi, Faud Daftari and Yasin Pasha). Refused invitation to sit with Committee of ex-Deputies, August 1920. Joined the tribes of Bagdad and Samara after Government's move against extremists, August 1920. Active preacher of jihad to tribes. Fled to Syria with Yussuf Suwaidi and returned with the Amir Feisal in June 1921. Tried, without success, to reassume his dominating position as a Shiah Nationalist leader, but it passed to Sheikh Mahdi-al-Khalisi. Took an active part in the anti-mandate controversy of 1922, but after the incident of the Sarai in August he left for Persia on the recommendation of the High Commissioner. Returned in May 1924 and took no part in politics, except that he advised those who came to him to support the treaty. Is an unstable, uncertain quality, and is not trusted. Appointed a Senator in 1925, and elected President of the Senate in 1929. Re-elected in 1930, 1931, 1932, and again in March 1933 and October 1933. His political opinions have recently become mellowed, and he manifests a desire to be on good terms with the Embassy.



64. *Muhammad Zaki.*

Basra lawyer, aged about 40. Close supporter of Yasin-al-Hashimi, and often elected Deputy for Basra. Returned to the Chamber in election of 1933, and became Minister for Justice in Cabinet of Rashid Ali-al-Gilani in March 1933. Resigned with Rashid Ali in October 1933.

65. *Musa Shabandar.*

Bagdadi Sunni, about 33 years old.

Elder son of Mahmud Shabandar, a wealthy land and property owner of Bagdad.

Went to Berlin soon after the armistice, and has since been living in Europe, mostly in Zurich and Berlin. Has frequently contributed anti-British articles to the Bagdad press, using the pen-name of "Alwan Abu Sharara." Believed to be in touch with the League against imperialism.

Came to Bagdad in autumn of 1932, and in January 1933 was appointed secretary of the permanent Iraqi delegation at the League of Nations.

Speaks English, French and German.

66. *Mustafa Pasha Kurdi.*

Sunni. Of an undistinguished family of Suleimani. Strong Kurdish Nationalist. He was president of a military tribunal in Constantinople which condemned several well-known Kemalists to death. Fearing reprisals he came to Bagdad in 1921, and in October 1922 accompanied Sheikh Mahmud to Suleimani, where he edited the *Bang-i-Kurdistan*, a Nationalist paper advocating an independent Kurdistan under Sheikh Mahmud. His position became somewhat difficult when Sheikh Mahmud entered into close relations with the Kemalists. He was removed from the editorship of the paper and not permitted to return to Bagdad. On the break with Sheikh Mahmud in February 1923 he not unwillingly accompanied the deputation which came to Bagdad to interview the High Commissioner. He is probably innocuous, but a born intriguer and busy-body. Speaks French and Arabic badly. With Dr. Mahmud Shukri and others is a member of the Kurdish Nationalist party. Stood as a candidate for election to the Chamber in the general election of 1928, but was not successful, as the Government refused to support him. Lives quietly in Suleimani on his small pension.

67. *Muzahim-al-Amin Pachahji.*

Sunni of Bagdad. A man of about 40, member of the Pan-Arab Society, Nada-al-Ilmi in Bagdad, where he edited a newspaper, the *Nahdhah*, suppressed by the Turks. Went to Basra before the war because he feared the Ottoman Government, and felt safer under Sayyid Talib's wing. Very intelligent; knows English. Enlightened, has been in Constantinople and in Syria. Not a believing Moslem. Employed in the courts at Basra. After the fall of Bagdad was appointed for a time judicial adviser to the Political Officer, Hillah. A man of considerable ambition and no small opinion of his own merits. Refused to take a post as judge in the Bagdad courts, believing that he could do far better for himself by practising as an advocate, which he did for some time in Basra. Nationalist. He returned to Bagdad in 1922 and resumed practice as an advocate there. Elected Deputy for Hillah in the Constituent Assembly March 1924, and sat in the first Chamber in 1925. Minister of Communications and Works in the Hashimi Cabinet August 1924. Iraqi Diplomatic Agent in London throughout 1927. There he made a close study of English politics. Since his recall to Bagdad in February 1928 has supported the active Nationalists. His ideas seem to be tinged with communism. Was prominent in anti-Zionist manifestations in summer of 1929. Became Minister of Economics and Communications in January 1931 and shortly after Minister for the Interior, in which post he seems unexpectedly to have given satisfaction to his British advisers. Affects an interest in labour questions as part of his penchant towards communism and modernism. Resigned in October 1931 on account of a difference with his colleagues regarding his dismissal of the Amin-al-Asimah (Mayor of Bagdad). Towards the end of May 1932 he was charged with complicity in the circulation of scurrilous anonymous letters making allegations against the

personal honour of the King. Resigned his seat in the Chamber, and was committed for trial with four others by Bagdad magistrate's court. Acquitted in October 1932.

68. *Dr. Naji-al-Assil.*

Bagdadi, born 1893. First became prominent in 1922 as semi-official Hashimite representative in London. Continued to represent Hashimite interests in London until final conquest of the Hejaz by Ibn Saud. Dr. Naji then became destitute in England, and was deported to Iraq in October 1925. In Iraq he was soon employed under the Ministry of Defence in the Iraqi Military Medical Service. Appointed Iraqi consul-general and Chargé d'Affaires in Jedda in August 1931. Returned to Bagdad in June 1932 to be present during the visit of the Amir Feisal, son of King Abdul Aziz-al-Saud. Appointed consul, Mohammerah, October 1932. Acting Director-General in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs April 1933.

69. *Naji Beg Ibn Shaukat Pasha.*

Sunni. Family originally from Georgia, settled in Bagdad for 200 years. Studied in Constantinople; was an officer of reserve. Joined the Shereef and was at Aqubah with Colonel Lawrence, for whom he has a great admiration. Returned to Bagdad in 1919. A quiet man; born in 1891; strong Nationalist like his brothers, Samir and Saib. Early in 1921 he was given an appointment under the Mutessarif of Bagdad, and subsequently became Wakil mutessarif. He showed considerable administrative ability, together with keenness for his work; was in cordial relations with his British advisers and withdrew completely from the extreme group. In 1922, disgusted with the trend that affairs were taking, he resigned. He was appointed Mutessarif of Kut in October 1922, and in June 1923 Mutessarif of Hillah. Mutessarif of Bagdad May 1924. Minister for Interior June 1928. Minister for Justice September 1929, and back to Interior in the changes which followed Abdul Muhsin's suicide. Seems gradually to be falling under Nationalist influences. Appointed Iraqi Minister at Angora in September 1930. Recalled to Bagdad to take up portfolio of Interior October 1931. Became Prime Minister in November 1932. Received the Order of Grand Officer of the Crown of Italy in January 1933. Resigned premiership March 1933. Minister for the Interior under Jamil-al-Madfai in November 1933.

70. *Naji-bin-Yusuf Suwaidi.*

Born in Bagdad 1883. Educated at Bagdad and in the school of law at Constantinople. 1905 Public Prosecutor in the Yaman; 1908 President of the Commercial Tribunal, Basra; 1910 member of the Bagdad Court of Appeal; 1910-11 Kaimakam of Kadhmain; 1911 ditto, Najaf; 1912 ditto, Hindiyah; 1913 Civil Inspector for Diarbekr, Urfa and Mardin; 1915 Inspector for the Eastern Region (Adana to Mosul); 1916 Civil Inspector of the Adana Wilayat, whence he was transferred to Konia; 1917 Civil Inspector in the Ministry of the Interior, Constantinople. Returned to Syria after the armistice and was appointed Deputy Military Governor of Bagdad, but threw up the appointment after a few days and returned to his former post in Aleppo. He was dismissed or asked to resign early in 1920 and expressed his intention of returning to Bagdad. Speaks French and English. Was a member of the convention which elected Abdullah Amir of Iraq in March 1920. He returned to Bagdad in March 1931, and was active in the preparations for the reception of the Amir Feisal. His Majesty was anxious to make him Minister of Interior in his first Cabinet, but was obliged to abandon the idea owing to the strenuous opposition of the Naqib. He was accordingly appointed Minister of Justice in September 1921, and held that office until April 1922, when, during the Akhwan crisis, he resigned with others. He bore his displacement well. Abdul Muhsin Beg appointed him Minister of Interior in his Cabinet November 1922, but he was speedily transferred once more to Justice, a post which he held till the Cabinet fell in November 1923. Clever, well educated and capable, he suffers from incurable corruption and love of intrigue. Essentially unstable. He is married to a Turkish woman, but is strongly anti-Turk. Deputy for Bagdad in the Constituent Assembly March 1924. He opposed the treaty and voted against it largely out of opposition to the Cabinet. Since 1925 he has continuously sat in



the Chamber and has held a number of ministerial posts. Became Prime Minister in November 1929, after the suicide of Abdul Muhsin, in whose last Cabinet he had been Minister for the Interior. His Cabinet resigned in March 1930. Re-elected for Bagdad in the general election of 1930, but resigned his seat in March 1931 (together with Rashid Ali al-Gilani, Yasin Pasha Al Hashimi and Ali Jaudat) as a protest against the alleged unconstitutional conduct of the Government. Accompanied King Feisal to Tehran in April 1932. Appointed Senator January 1933.

71. *Naqib Zadah of Bagdad, Mahmud-bin-Abdul Rahman.*

Naqib of Bagdad, born 1867. A man of very limited intelligence. Took no part in the independence movement of 1920. In July 1922 the Hizb-al-Hurr was formed under his presidency to support the treaty and the principles of the Cabinet of his father, Sayyid Abdul Rahman. It survived the fall of the Naqib in August 1922, and after the extremist leaders had been interned in Henjam it received a very large accession of members, including practically all the leading tribesmen. It was, and remained, however, totally inert. It continued to exist till August 1923, when the committee, after having first given out that the party was in favour of co-operation in the resumed elections, took offence at the neglect shown by the Prime Minister, Muhsin Beg Sadun, to a protest they had made against the registration of tribesmen, declared that the party would not take part in the elections, and then abruptly closed it down. Deputy for Diyala in the Constituent Assembly March 1924. He took a moderate line as to the treaty, but when the final vote was taken declined to vote. He came into prominence again on the death of his father in June 1927. Rashid Ali Gilani (*q.v.*) took the opportunity, heavily supported by the King, to try and obtain a share in the control and the rich Qadiriya Waqf, and it was originally decided to appoint Sayyid Mahmud to the three offices held by his father, *i.e.*, the Niqabat, the Mushaiyikha and the Mutawalliship of the Waqf, on condition that in the latter capacity he was assisted by a committee consisting of Sayyid Abdullah (*q.v.*), Sayyid Daud and Rashid Ali. The proposal was strongly resented by Sayyid Mahmud. Whatever Sayyid Mahmud's defects as a politician, he is highly respected in Iraq and elsewhere where the influence of the Naqib extends, and was undoubtedly the most suitable person to succeed his father. Since becoming Naqib has taken no part in politics. Recent legislation concerning animal and land taxation has complicated the position in regard to the legality of certain of the waqf revenues of the Qadiriya shrine in Bagdad, of which the Naqib is the mutawalli, and this has brought him into conflict with the modernists, who seem disposed to try to abolish all waqfs.

72. *Nasrat-al-Farsi.*

Minister for Finance November 1932. Lawyer of Bagdad about 1890. In early days of Iraq Government held somewhat extreme Nationalist views, which he voiced as a Deputy in the Chamber. Was later given an appointment in the Ministry of Justice, where he served diligently for a number of years. Steady and intelligent, but inclined to be obstructive.

Resigned with Naji Beg Shaukat in March 1933. Appointed Minister for Finance in Jamil Beg Al Madfai's Cabinet in November 1933.

73. *Nishat Effendi Sanawi.*

Advocate-General in Bagdad. Nephew of Suleiman-bin-Taha-al-Sanawi. Studied in the school of law, Constantinople. He was in Bagdad before the occupation; went to Mosul with the Turks and was employed in various capacities there. Returned after the armistice and took service under the British Administration. Quiet, intelligent, spectacled; aged about 40. Nationalist. One of the founders of the Ahliyah School, Bagdad, February 1920. Was appointed Director of the Law School when it was reopened in 1919; criminal magistrate February 1922; judge in the Court of Appeal March 1923. Amin-al-Asimah, Bagdad, 1925. Was still in the last post at beginning of 1930. Appointed Director-General in the Ministry of the Interior in April 1930, transferred to be Principal of the Law School February 1931. Reappointed Director-General in the Ministry of the Interior in November 1931. Appointed Administrative Inspector November 1933.

74. *Nuri Beg Ibn Fattah Pasha.*

Sunni of Bagdad. Ex-Turkish officer. Aged 35. Strong Nationalist. He was engaged during 1919 and the early part of 1920 in trading with Syria, and was probably an agent for Nationalist propaganda. Deported to Henjam August 1920. Released and returned to Bagdad February 1921. Took an active part in the anti-mandate agitation of 1922. In the following spring he was one of those responsible for anti-British placards issued over the signature of the Supreme Committee of Iraq Secret Societies, and in the autumn of 1923 he was engaged with young Arab Nationalists in attempts to resuscitate the Ahd. His father took him in hand and threatened to cut off all supplies, since when he has fallen off, but he still associates with the young Nationalists.

75. *Nuri Pasha Said.*

Sunni. Major-general; Bagdadi; son of an accountant; his grandfather came from Mosul. Born 1888; educated in Constantinople; served in Balkan war. He was one of the founders of the Ahd in 1913, and came from Constantinople to Iraq in order to start branches in that country. He was in Basra at the time of the occupation as a patient in the American hospital; joined the Arab army June 1916; commanded troops till arrival of Jafar Pasha (his brother-in-law); served as C.G.S. till fall of Damascus. Speaks Turkish, Arabic, German, French and English. A good strategist; very receptive of ideas; clever, hard-working, rash and hot-headed under fire. A modernist with an exceptionally alert intelligence and a great belief in an Anglo-Arab *entente*. D.S.O. 1917; C.M.G. 1919. Was in Paris for a short time with Feisal in 1918; returned to Syria March 1919. Returned with Feisal to Paris in September and came back to Syria at the end of November 1919. Went on a mission to Paris and London in February 1920, returning to Syria in May. He always wished for a reasonable rapprochement between the French and the Arabs, and dissuaded King Feisal from offering resistance to the French, on the ground that he could not hope for support from the British. When the break came in July 1920 he went with Feisal to England. Returned to Bagdad in February 1921 and took charge of the Ministry of Defence during the absence of Jafar Pasha at the Cairo Conference. On his return became C.G.S., with which duty he combined that of director-general of police, which appointment he held from October 1921 to October 1922. Acting Minister of Defence from November 1922 to November 1923, when he became Minister just before the fall of the Cabinet of Muhsin Beg Al Sadun. He held the same portfolio in the next Cabinet under Jafar Pasha. Acting C.G.S. in March 1924, when Taha Beg left to join Sir Percy Cox at the Constantinople Conference. The post of C.G.S. was abolished in July 1924, and that of Deputy Commander-in-chief created. Nuri Pasha was appointed to it, and thus relinquished his portfolio in the Askari Cabinet, a day or two before it went out of office. Minister of Defence again in November 1926, and has retained that portfolio with only short intervals out of office ever since. A man of high and genuine Nationalist enthusiasm, he displays Puckish propensities, but possesses courage to an extent which is unequalled by any other Iraqi politician. Became Prime Minister in March 1930 and maintained this position for the unprecedented period of two-and-a-half years, when King Feisal dismissed him owing to jealousy. Helped to negotiate new Anglo-Iraqi Treaty, which he signed in June 1930. Visited Jedda spring 1931 to negotiate "Bon-Voisinage" Treaty with Nejd and the Hejaz. On becoming Prime Minister in 1930 he founded a new political party called the Ahd-al-Iraqi (the Iraqi League). This controls his political supporters in the Chamber, but has no organisation outside Parliament. Resigned with whole Cabinet the 19th October, 1931; reaccepted office same day with reformed Cabinet. Visited Angora with King Feisal July 1931, and again in December-January 1931-32. During latter visit signed with Turkish Government an Extradition Treaty, a Treaty of Commerce and a Residence Convention. Resigned premiership in October 1932. Became Minister for Foreign Affairs in Cabinet of Rashid Ali Gilani in March 1933. Resigned with Rashid Ali in October 1933, and accepted portfolio of Foreign Affairs and Defence under Jamil-al-Madfai in November 1933.

76. *Rashid-bin-Sayyid Abdul Wahab, known as Rashid Ali Gilani.*

Sunni of Bagdad. A distant relation of the Naqib. In Turkish times was Bash Katib of Waqf. Strong supporter of the Committee of Union and Progress,



unpopular with the Naqib Zadah. Fled to Mosul with the Turks on the capture of Bagdad, and after the fall of Mosul was appointed Mudir Auqaf in Mosul under the British Administration. Practised as a lawyer, and in May 1921 was appointed a judge in the Court of Appeal. Became a professor in the Bagdad law school. His work as a judge won him the good opinion of his advisers. Was appointed Minister of Justice in Yasin Pasha's (q.v.) Cabinet in 1924. Resigned over the signing of the Turkish Petroleum Company's Concession in March 1925, which, at Yasin Pasha's instigation, he strongly opposed. Became Minister of Interior in the second Saduniyah Cabinet in June 1925, but resigned almost immediately on being elected President of the Chamber of Deputies. He was again elected President of the Chamber when Parliament reassembled in November the same year. He resigned in May 1926 owing to a personal altercation in the House between himself and the Minister of Finance, Sibeh Beg Nashat (q.v.), in which he, Rashid Ali, was entirely in the wrong. His resignation, which he announced theatrically from the Speaker's chair, leaving the Chamber without further ado, was the cause of a political crisis. The whole of the Opposition and the intermediate moderate party walked out of the House and refused to attend debates. At Parliament's first meeting after reopening in November 1926, Rashid Ali managed, by a combination of his own party with Yasin Pasha's and others, to secure his own re-election as Speaker, as opposed to the Government's candidate, Hikmet Beg Suleiman. In his speech, on taking the chair, Rashid Ali openly gloated over his election and the defeat of the Government's candidate. The Prime Minister treated his election as a vote of no confidence and the Cabinet resigned at once. In the subsequent Askari Cabinet Rashid Ali accepted the post of Minister of Interior. Is not without ability, and has a considerable following among the young lawyer class. Stands high in the Royal favour, being entirely subservient to His Majesty. Obstinate and conceited, he never knows when to give way, and considers it a point of personal honour never to change his mind or admit that he is wrong. Re-elected to the Chamber of Deputies in the general election of 1930, but resigned his seat in March 1931 in company with Yasin-al-Hashimi, Nejid Suwaidi and Ali Jaudat as a protest against the conduct of Nuri Pasha's Government. Since early 1931 has been a prominent leader of the newly formed Hizb-al-Ikha-al-Watani (the party of National Brotherhood). As leader of Hizb-al-Ikha he encouraged the general strike in July 1931, hoping thereby to embarrass Nuri Pasha's Cabinet. Appointed Rais of the Royal diwan (chief private secretary to the King) in July 1932. Became Prime Minister in March 1933. Resigned October 1933.

#### 77. *Rashid Beg Al Khojah.*

Sunni of Bagdad. Staff officer in Turkish army. Came to Damascus after the armistice. Prominent member of the Ahd-al-Iraqi. He returned to Bagdad in November 1920 and was appointed mutessarif in January 1921. He is weak and much under the thumb of the extreme National group. In February 1922 he was appointed Mutessarif of Mosul, where he was completely under the influence of Mustafa Sabunji. As his presence in a frontier division was considered inexpedient by the Iraqi Government, he was removed and reappointed Mutessarif of Bagdad. Appointed Iraqi consul-general at Cairo October 1928, and Director-General of Education January 1930. Consul-general, Beirut, August 1931. Chargé d'Affaires and consul-general at Jedda, August 1933, but did not take up post. Appointed Minister for Defence under Naji Shaukat, November 1932. Resigned with Naji Shaukat's Cabinet in March 1933. Elected President of the Chamber of Deputies November 1933 after resignation of Jamil-al-Madfai.

#### 78. *Rauf Beg Chadirji.*

Sunni of Bagdad. He was Mayor of Bagdad at the time of the cutting of New Street and earned a great deal of personal unpopularity thereby. Left for Berlin shortly before the occupation, and subsequently went to Switzerland, returning to Bagdad in the summer of 1920, up to which time permission to return had been refused him. Speaks French perfectly, English and German well. He set up practice as a barrister and consorted much with British officials. He took no part in the Nationalist agitation; nevertheless, when his father was deported to Constantinople in August, he was asked to return with him. He came back in 1921 and resumed his legal work without taking any part in politics. He

has most of the business of foreign firms in his hands owing to his knowledge of English. He was in England on a visit during the summer of 1923, returning home in September. A retiring man of modernist opinions. Deputy for Hillah in the Constituent Assembly in March 1924. He was strongly opposed to the passage of the treaty without amendments and voted against it. Chosen director of the law school August 1924. Minister of Finance, Second Saduniyah Cabinet, and afterwards became Minister of Justice in Jafar Pasha's Cabinet in November 1926. Iraqi Minister to Angora, autumn 1929. One of the most refined and most likeable men in Bagdad. Resigned post as Minister at Angora in December 1930, and returned to Bagdad as legal adviser to the Iraq Petroleum Company.

#### 79. *Rauf Beg Al Kubaisi.*

Sunni; family comes originally from Kubaisah, but now living in Bagdad. He was commandant of gendarmerie in Aleppo under Jafar Pasha, and was sent by the latter to Dair in December 1919 to co-operate with Captain Chamier in ejecting Ramadan Shalash, who had forcibly occupied the place. He was, however, unable to control Ramadan. As colonel of gendarmerie he did very useful work in Aleppo in keeping order before the advent of the French in July 1920. Refused office under the French and returned to Bagdad in February 1921. He was appointed Kaimakam of Suq in November 1921. By methods of exceptional severity he succeeded in collecting a little revenue and was appointed, at the wish of the King, acting Mutessarif of Muntafiq in December. With no administrative experience he was unable to tackle any of the local problems, but engaged hotly in the anti-mandate agitation. He was removed in June. He then threw himself in with the extreme Nationalist group in Bagdad, and in the autumn of 1923 was engaged with them in attempting to resuscitate the Ahd. He was the agent for Muntafiq in this endeavour. Appointed Director-General of Jails and has provided appointments for many of his friends. Is a follower of Yasin Pasha. Since his appointment to be Director of Jails has played no part in politics. Appointed Mutessarif of Basrah January 1930. Dismissed for incompetence April 1931. Appointed Director-General of Auqaf in summer of 1933.

#### 80. *Rustam Beg Haidar.*

Mutawali of Baalbak, where his family owns considerable estates. Well educated, speaks excellent French and English. He came to Iraq with the Amir Feisal in June 1921, and after the coronation was appointed head of the King's diwan. The tenets of his sect being practically identical with those of the Shiah, he has a strong bias towards that community. For this reason, and also on account of his Syrian origin, his position in the Palace was not regarded with favour by the Sunnis of Iraq. Socially very pleasant; a quiet, well-bred man. Appointed Minister for Finance November 1930 in Nuri Pasha's Cabinet. Acted as Prime Minister twice during Nuri Pasha's absence from Iraq. Went to Europe with King Feisal in summer of 1931. While in Syria, on his return in September, he let it be understood that Feisal would probably become King of Syria and of Iraq. Resigned from the Ministry of Finance when Nuri Pasha's Cabinet fell in October 1932. Became Minister for Economics and Communications in March 1933. Resigned with Rashid Ali in October 1933, and was reappointed to the same Ministry under Jamil Madfai in November 1933.

#### 81. *Said Beg Ibn Ali Beg.*

Mir (chief) of the Yazidis. Lives at Baidra near Mosul. Weak character, drinks heavily and indulges in every sort of vice. Much under the control of his mother, Maiyana, who is a woman of personality and was at one time a noted beauty. The Yazidis are dissatisfied with Said Beg on account of his profligate living, and from time to time there is a movement to dispose him and substitute another member of the ruling family. So far, however, traditional loyalty has been stronger than their critical faculty, and Said Beg has succeeded in retaining his position.

#### 82. *Salih Jabr.*

Young Shiah lawyer of Najaf employed for some time as a judge. Elected Deputy February 1930 and resigned from the bench. Acquired notoriety in the Chamber as a persistent asker of questions and ready speaker. Appointed Minister for Education under Jamil Madfai November 1933.



83. *Salman-bin-Ahmad Daud.*

Sunni of Bagdad. Educated at Bagdad and has never travelled. Age about 35. Was appointed headmaster of Fadhl primary school, Bagdad, in 1918, but was dismissed on the recommendation of Husni Beg Abdul Hadi, Mudir-al-Maarif. Employed subsequently in the office of the judicial secretary. He belonged to the group of young men holding advanced opinions on Arab independence, and took an active part in the agitation which led to the petition asking for Islamic government presented by the Majlis of the 22nd January, 1919. He was also very active in the Nationalist movement of 1920. Behaved more like a silly school boy than a man. In the autumn of 1920 he was the author of leaders in the advanced Nationalist paper, the *Istiqlal*, and was arrested in connexion with its suppression by Sayid Talib in February 1921, but released on security. He was given a post in the Bagdad Municipality in the autumn of 1921. He took a surreptitious part in the anti-mandate agitation of 1922, in which his father was a leading figure, and after the arrests of the 25th August he made a discreet disappearance for a few days. In the spring of 1923 he was believed to be one of those responsible for anti-British posters issued over the seal of the Supreme Committee of Iraq Secret Societies. In December 1923 he went with Sabih Beg Nashat, as his secretary, to the Kuwait Conference. An unbalanced man, but quick-witted. Of late years has been occupied with his legal practice and occasional journalism.

84. *Taha-al-Hashimi Pasha.*

Brother of Yasin Pasha Al Hashimi (*q.v.*). Served in Turkish army and was employed in Arabia and the Yemen during the war. Was given a post on the Turkish General Staff in Constantinople in 1920, but returned to Bagdad in 1922 to join the Iraqi army, and was at once appointed Officer Commanding Troops in Mosul. Appointed chief of the General Staff and came to Bagdad in 1923. Was attached to Sir Percy Cox in May 1924 for the boundary negotiations with the Turkish Government which followed the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne. The post of chief of the General Staff was abolished shortly after his return in August 1924, and for a while he acted as tutor to the (then) Crown Prince Ghazi. Appointed chief of the Census Department in 1926 and Director of Education in 1928. In 1930 he returned as chief of the General Staff to the Ministry of Defence, and was promoted Fariq (general). In 1931 he visited the Imam Yahiyah of the Yemen and concluded a treaty of friendship between the Yemen and Iraq.

He is unpopular with the British officers of the military mission, whom he endeavours to isolate from general intercourse with the Iraqi officers of the army.

85. *Tashin Qadri.*

Sunni of Damascus. Was with Feisal in Damascus and accompanied him to Europe in July 1920. Came with him to Bagdad in June 1921, and was appointed an A.D.C. to the King in August. Married the daughter and heiress of Abdul Wahhab Pasha Qartas of Basra. Speaks English and French. Pleasant and clever. Appointed Master of Ceremonies in the palace March 1932. Accompanied King Feisal on his State visit to England in 1933 and received the K.C.V.O.

86. *Talib Mushtaq.*

Sunni of Bagdad. Father was head clerk in Baquba. Took part in the anti-mandate agitation of 1922, and in the spring of 1923 was one of those responsible for anti-British posters issued over the signature of the Supreme Committee of Iraq Secret Societies. Now Inspector of Schools. Resigned appointment of Inspector of Schools and Secretary to the Ministry of Education in March 1931. Appointed Area Education Officer, Basra; resigned in May 1931 in a huff. Was bitterly antagonistic to Mr. Somerville, the officiating adviser to the Ministry of Education until 1932, and inspired venomous paragraphs in the press against him. Appointed second secretary in Iraqi Legation in Angora November 1931.

87. *Taufiq-bin-Yusuf Suwaidi.*

Born 1889. Studied in Bagdad and in the law school at Constantinople; in 1911 went to Paris to study international law. In 1913 first interpreter to the Ministry of Education, Constantinople. Represented Iraq at the Arab Conference held in Paris in July 1913. After the armistice went to Syria and was appointed

peace judge in Damascus. Was a member of the convention which appointed Abdullah Amir of Iraq in March 1920. He returned to Bagdad in October 1921, and in November was appointed Assistant Government Counsellor and Director of the Law School. From the latter position he was ejected in August 1924, Rauf Beg Chadirji being elected in his place. Later re-elected to the law school. Minister for Education January 1928. Prime Minister 1929. President of the Chamber 1929. Iraqi Minister at Tehran March 1931. Iraqi permanent delegate at Geneva December 1933.

88. *Thabit Abdul Nur.*

Son of Aziz Abdul Nur, a prominent Jacobite Christian of Mosul. He was christened Nikole. Was an officer in the Turkish army, embezzled money and fled to Syria to join Shereefian cause. At this time he changed name to Thabit, became a Moslem and performed the pilgrimage to Mecca. Came to Bagdad in November 1921 and became prominent in extreme Nationalist politics. Elected Deputy for Mosul in general election of 1930, and appointed Director of Oil Affairs in the Ministry of Economics and Communications in June 1931. The post was abolished in March 1933. Tried in 1932 for misappropriating the funds of the Agricultural Exhibition (April 1932), but acquitted.

Appointed counsellor in the Iraqi Legation in London December 1933.

89. *Yasin Pasha Al Hashimi.*

Sunni. Family came originally from the neighbourhood of Kirkuk and may be of Turkish (Saljuq) descent. Yasin's father was a Mukhtar of Bagdad. Yasin was in military service in Mosul in 1913, and was the founder and organiser of the local branch of the Ahd. He was moved across to Syria at the outbreak of war, but was not trusted by the Turks and was brought to Constantinople in 1915, where he remained for some time a subject of deep suspicion. Commanded a Turkish division on the Russian front in Galicia with great success in 1917. Commanded Turkish VIIIth Corps. Was brought to Syria, but having reached the rank of major-general his ambitions were satisfied and he remained loyal to the Turks, in spite of the fact that Nuri Pasha, who was then with the Shereefian army, wrote to him three times asking him to join the Arab revolt. Yasin declares that he did not receive the letters. G.O.C. at Salt and Amman in 1918 where, in the spring, he proved too good a strategist for us. He was wounded and left at Damascus on the retreat of the Turks; Nuri Pasha found him there and persuaded him to join the Arab movement. He was made C.G.S. of the Arab army, a post he held till November 1919. When the British evacuated Syria in November 1919, he was believed to be preparing a *coup* against Feisal, whose views he considered too moderate. He was also much feared by the French. He was therefore ordered to accompany the British forces and was interned at Ramleh till May 1920, when he was allowed to return to Damascus, Feisal having repeatedly requested that he should be released. He did not, however, resume his appointment in the Arab army. Doctrinaire, dogmatic, efficient, unscrupulous and extremely ambitious, he was the dominant personality in Syria. Speaks comparatively good English and French. In the winter of 1921-22, his brother, Taha, having obtained a position in G.H.Q., Constantinople, he made an effort to get back to the Turkish army, but he was refused. Finally, he was permitted to return to Bagdad in March 1922. The King was anxious to appoint him Minister of the Interior in September, but there was irrefutable evidence that he had dallied with the anti-Mandate party, and in spite of his former expressions, he refused to give the King an assurance that he would support the treaty. In November he became Minister of Communications and Works in Abdul Mushin Beg's Cabinet. He employed his great capacity to advantage in his Ministry, but was unfailingly obstructive in the council, especially over matters such as the subsidiary agreement dealing with the employment of British officials. He resigned office in November 1923, on the fall of Abdul Muhsin Beg's Cabinet. Member for Bagdad in the Constituent Assembly, March 1924. He was chairman of the committee appointed to study the treaty. He persistently opposed the ratification of the treaty without amendments and voted in that sense. The Askari Cabinet having fallen into unpopularity, Yasin Pasha accepted the premiership, and the new Cabinet came into being in August 1924, Yashin Pasha being Minister for Defence as well as Prime Minister. His Cabinet resigned



in June 1925 owing to internal dissensions. In 1926 Yasin Pasha accepted office in the Askari Coalition Government as Minister of Finance. The ablest politician in the country, he is possessed of unbounded ambitions. Minister for Finance in Naji Suwaidi's Cabinet formed in November 1929. There he was the dominant personality and pursued determinedly a policy aiming at reducing the number of British officials in the Iraqi Government. Re-elected to the Chamber of Deputies in general election of 1930, and led the Opposition to Nuri Pasha's Cabinet together with Rashid Ali-al-Gilani. Resigned his seat in March 1931 in company with Naji Suwaidi, Rashid Ali and Ali Jaudat. Has a pension of 700 rupees a month and many interests in pump-irrigated lands. Playing a leading part in giving political encouragement to the general strike in Bagdad in July 1931, hoping through the strike to deal a blow at Nuri Pasha's Cabinet. The King was anxious to make him Prime Minister in October 1932 when Nuri Pasha resigned, but he would not accept the King's condition that he should announce his acceptance of the Treaty of Alliance of 1930. Became Minister of Finance in Cabinet of Rashid Ali-al-Gilani in March 1933. Resigned with Rashid Ali in October 1933 and did not join Cabinet formed by Jamil Madfai.

There is reason to suppose that since his visit to London in 1933 he has modified his extremist views though he remains a staunch Nationalist. Is generally believed to be in favour of a republic with himself as first President.

#### 90. Yussuf Ghanimah.

Chaldean Catholic of Bagdad. Comfortably off, owns house property in the city. Mixes freely with Moslems of his generation. Intelligent and hard working. Was made Minister of Finance in Abdul Muhsin Beg's Cabinet formed in January 1928, after having shown industry and ability as *rapporteur* of the Finance Committee of the Chamber. Has sat in Parliament for Bagdad since the first election. Visited Europe in summer of 1929. His personal appearance, which is insignificant, is against him. Lost his seat in the Chamber in the general election of 1930. Has since then taken a small part in the activities of the two Opposition parties, the Hizb-al-Watani (Nationalist party) and the Hizb-al-Ikha-al-Watani (the party of National Brotherhood). Appointed Director-General of Revenue in the Ministry of Finance, December 1932.

#### 91. Yussuf Zainal.

Bagdadi Sunni, age about 30.

First came to notice as the leader of the group of Iraqi students at Beirut University, which at the time of the ratification of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1926, despatched telegrams to the Iraqi Parliament accusing the Government of treason.

In October 1926 he became a secondary school teacher and led the school rioting which followed the publication of Anis Nausuli's *History of Omayyids* in January 1927.

In February 1928 he was prominent in the anti-Zionist demonstrations which took place in Bagdad at the time of the late Lord Melchett's visit. For this he was dismissed from the Education Service and for a time ordered to live at Fao.

In August 1931 he was appointed vice-consul in the Iraqi consulate-general at Beirut. Transferred to be secretary, Iraqi Legation in London, October 1932. Dismissed from the service on the 20th November for misconduct during the period he acted as consul-general, Beirut.

[E 326/326/93]

No. 108.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received January 15.)*

(No. 5. Confidential.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, January 4, 1934.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 805, Confidential, of the 21st December last, I have the honour to inform you that the Iraq Petroleum Company paid in full on a gold basis the sums due from them to the Iraqi Government on the 1st January.

2. On the other hand, the payment due from the British Oil Development Company has not yet been received.

3. I have sent a copy of this despatch to the Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

[E 328/328/93]

No. 109.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received January 15.)*

(No. 7. Confidential.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, January 4, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith my report on the heads of foreign missions in Iraq.

2. The passages between asterisks are reproduced from last year's report.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

Enclosure in No. 109.

*Report on Heads of Foreign Missions in Iraq.*

MINISTERS.

*Turkey.*

\*TAHIR LUTFI BEY has been Turkish Minister Plenipotentiary since 1930.

He is an agreeable but somewhat slow-witted Turk of the old school, whose previous service has been passed chiefly in the Balkans. He enjoys excellent relations with the Iraqi Government. His wife, who is a pleasant and intelligent woman, is very popular in English society. (1932.)\*

*Persia.*

In September 1933 Seyyid Baqir Khan Kazemi relinquished his post in Bagdad on being appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs in Tehran. The Persian Legation is at present (December 1933) in charge of the first secretary, Mirza Ali Asghar Khan Keyvani, a pleasant but somewhat colourless person who is little seen in local diplomatic society.

It is reported that Inayatullah Khan Samii has been appointed to succeed Seyyid Baqir Khan Kazemi, but he had not at the close of the year arrived to take up his post. He has previously held the same position here, and in 1929 signed the Perso-Iraqi "Accord provisoire." He is popular with Iraqis.

*United States of America.*

\*Mr. Paul Knabenshue was appointed Minister Resident of the United States of America in November 1932. He has seen long service in the Near East, having been for many years consul-general in Cairo and later in Jerusalem, where he and his Irish wife were very popular, and had a reputation for entertaining wisely and well.

This is Mr. Knabenshue's first diplomatic post. He is evidently uncomfortable in his present Legation, and is busy planning a new spacious building in Bagdad West. (1932.)\*

Owing to the economic crisis in America, his building plans had not come to fruition by the end of 1933. This architectural stimulus denied him, he seems to have gone to seed somewhat during the past year and is rather too prone to bewail, in and out of season, the sad lot which obliges him still to live in uncongenial premises, and to make both ends meet on a depreciated dollar. Dignity is not his major suit.

*Germany.*

\*Dr. Fritz Grobba came to Bagdad in March 1932 as Chargé d'Affaires, and was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary on his return from leave in December last.

I first met Herr Grobba in Kabul in 1924, where he showed himself to be friendly towards British policy. He has had long experience of the Middle East,

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and served with the Turkish armies in Palestine during the war. He is an able and well-informed man, who is likely to work actively to further the interests of the steadily-growing German colony in Bagdad.

He speaks accurate though somewhat laboured English. His wife speaks and writes English as though it were her native tongue. (1932)\*

Dr. Grobba recently showed two Nazi propaganda films—"Tag der nationalen Arbeit" and "Deutschland erwacht"—to an audience of colleagues and Iraqi notables. It was clear that he did so *à contre-cœur*, and I understand that his staff experienced considerable difficulty and no little unpleasantness in hiring a cinema for the purpose, the cinemas being largely in Jewish hands.

During the past year, he has continued to prove to be a good colleague and has not hesitated to take me into his confidence, both in regard to current questions of mutual interest and to such as affect him personally.

#### Poland.

M. Stanislas Hempel, Polish Minister at Tehran, was accredited early in the year as Minister Plenipotentiary at Bagdad, and presented his credentials to King Feisal on the 1st May, 1933. After a short stay in Bagdad, M. Hempel returned to Tehran with his wife, but he reappeared at Bagdad in September and took part in the ceremonies attending the funeral of King Feisal.

My acquaintance with M. Hempel is too slight to permit me to add anything to the remarks passed upon him by His Majesty's Minister at Tehran in his report for 1932 on the heads of missions at Tehran.

#### CHARGÉS D'AFFAIRES.

##### France.

\*M. Paul Lépassier was appointed French Chargé d'Affaires at Bagdad on the 30th June, 1930. Much below the average height, he is handicapped by his insignificant appearance, and his extreme nervousness and excitability have made him something of a figure of fun among his colleagues.

Before coming to Bagdad, M. Lépassier was secretary to the High Commissioner of Syria for five years, and professes to hold strong views on what he describes as mismanagement of Syrian affairs by the French High Commission. He tells me that he is convinced that the only satisfactory solution of the Syrian problem is for the French Government to follow our example in Iraq, but he laments to me in private that the Quai d'Orsay is generally overruled by the military party in Paris. (1932)\*

The action of the French authorities in Syria in rearming and returning to Iraq the insurgent Assyrians, their alleged disregard of his reports and warnings and the consequent resentment evinced by the Iraqi Government were the cause of much embarrassment to M. Lépassier, whose position at best is none too easy. These circumstances have goaded him on to further candid criticism of the administration of Syria.

The French consulate (as it is still called) has been enlarged and extensively rebuilt in the course of the year, and the consulate proper has been separated from the diplomatic offices and the Chargé d'Affaires' residence. M. Lépassier doubtless hopes that this will be a step towards his promotion to ministerial rank.

##### Italy.

\*Cav. Uff. Mario Porta was appointed Chargé d'Affaires in November 1932. He has already seen service in Bogotá and Addis Ababa, but is none the less depressed by living conditions in Bagdad.

Cav. Porta is a dapper little man and speaks excellent English. His bearing towards this Embassy has always been friendly and correct, but I suspect an inferiority complex. He complained to me at his first visit that he ought to have been allowed to deliver his letters of credence to King Feisal in person.

He has set himself assiduously to study the politics of the Arabic world, and confidently hopes to be able to increase Italian prestige in the Middle East. Like his predecessor, he feels that England and France have divided the plums between them, and he is anxious that Italy should get her share.

He has an English wife. (1932)\*

Cav. Porta now sports a trim Arab beard, probably cultivated to curry favour in Arab *milieux* and to facilitate a journey to Riyadh, which he still contemplates.

I suspect him of a desire to intrigue, and I would not be prepared to stake much on his veracity.

#### Belgium.

M. Robert van de Kerchove d'Hallebast presented his credentials as Belgian Chargé d'Affaires on the 6th May, 1933. He spent about a fortnight in Bagdad in the early summer, since when I have not seen him.

M. d'Hallebast also holds the appointment of Belgian consul-general for Syria and Palestine, with Beirut as his permanent headquarters. He is, I believe, married.

#### Saudi Arabia.

Sheikh Ibrahim-bin-Muammar presented his credentials in June 1933 as the first Chargé d'Affaires for Saudi Arabia at Bagdad. A pleasant man with an attractive presence and courtly manners. He is said to have made efforts to overcome Shiah dislike of the Wahabi Kingdom by sedulously flattering the ulema, but otherwise he has not been noticeably active.

#### Czechoslovakia.

M. Vratislav Trčka, Czechoslovak Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran arrived in Bagdad two days after the date when he was expected, and presented his credentials as Czechoslovak Chargé d'Affaires at Bagdad on the 30th November, 1933. He was not accompanied by his wife and left for Tehran shortly afterwards.

M. Trčka appears to be agreeable and intelligent. His sense of humour is considerable, and I should say that he is not easily perturbed.

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No. 110.

United Kingdom Delegate to Foreign Office.—(Received January 19.)

(No. 11.)

THE United Kingdom delegate to the League of Nations presents his compliments, and has the honour to transmit copies of a record of the thirteenth meeting of the Council Committee on the 15th January, respecting the Assyrian question, of which a copy has been sent to His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad.

United Kingdom Delegation,  
Geneva, January 17, 1934.

Enclosure in No. 110.

ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

Record of the Thirteenth Meeting of the Council Committee held at 3.30 P.M. on January 15, 1934.

#### Reply of the Brazilian Government.

Dr. Kerno circulated to the committee a copy of the telegram (annex 1) received by the Spanish Government from the Spanish Ambassador in Rio de Janeiro, communicating the reply of the Brazilian Government to the representations made by the Spanish Ambassador on the lines proposed at the twelfth meeting of the Council Committee.

The President said that the Brazilian Government had informed the Spanish Ambassador that this was their final reply.

Dr. Kerno observed that the committee must present a report to the Council at the present session of that body, and in the report it would be necessary to refer to the Brazilian reply. He asked whether it would be in order to do so on the basis of the message received by the Spanish Government.

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*The President* said that he thought that the message communicated to the Spanish Government, though representing the final attitude of the Brazilian Government, could scarcely be regarded as their official reply. It was not a signed communication from that Government and would no doubt be confirmed in writing in due course.

*Dr. Kerno* suggested that in that case it would be advisable to obtain official confirmation from the Brazilian Minister at Berne.

After some discussion, *the President* expressed the view that it would be advisable for the Secretariat informally to approach the Brazilian Minister at Berne and to secure from him some official communication in this sense. If, however, the Brazilian Minister at Berne was not in a position to make such an official communication before the report of the committee had to be presented to the Council, the report would, of course, have to say simply that a message in the sense of annex 1 had been received from the Spanish Ambassador.

*The United Kingdom Representative* asked whether it would not be wiser to decide before pressing for an official reply whether it was desirable to enter into further negotiations with the Brazilian Government regarding the third condition which they had laid down. If it were decided to enter into further negotiations, it might be an advantage that the Brazilian Government should not meanwhile commit themselves to that condition in an official communication. If they did so, they might be the more reluctant to change their attitude. The question seemed to be whether further negotiations should take place forthwith or whether they should be postponed until the proposed mission of investigation had been sent out to Brazil and had reported favourably.

*The President* said that in the circumstances the committee had perhaps better discuss the substance of the Brazilian reply before considering the procedure for getting it confirmed. The reply as a whole was a great advance on the previous attitude of the Brazilian Government. The idea of a trial limit had been entirely abandoned and the Brazilian Government were now prepared to admit all the Assyrians. There were, however, three conditions attached to this. The first two had been anticipated. The third obviously raised a question of some difficulty and he would welcome the observations of the members of the committee on this point.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that while in London he had seen the chairman of Parana Plantations (Limited), who was aware of the Brazilian reply. The chairman of the company, while still prepared to carry out the settlement of the Assyrians, had made it clear that the company could certainly not accept the third condition laid down by the Brazilian Government, and if the Brazilian Government insisted on maintaining this condition, the only solution seemed to be for the League to assume the ultimate responsibility for repatriating or resettling the Assyrians elsewhere. The United Kingdom Representative thought it was most unfortunate, however, that the third condition should have been laid down in its present form. It had been anticipated that the Brazilian Government would themselves disclaim responsibility for repatriating or resettling the Assyrians if they did not adapt themselves to the country, but this was a very different thing from the positive form in which the condition was now worded. The responsibility was not merely disclaimed on the part of the Brazilian Government, but was definitely laid on another entity, namely, Parana Plantations (Limited). The condition would have a most unfortunate psychological effect on the Assyrians themselves, for they would be certain to regard themselves merely as temporary settlers in Brazil, and whenever things did not appear to be going smoothly they would at once petition the League to be removed elsewhere. Furthermore, the wording of the condition was unfortunate in another, possibly minor, respect. Normally, if the Assyrians went in a body to Brazil and afterwards individuals or families who could afford to move elsewhere formed a desire to do so, they would go at their own expense. As the condition was now worded, however, they would be perfectly within their rights in claiming that the company must transfer them at its expense as soon as they expressed a wish to be transferred. It would be most unfortunate for these reasons if the Assyrians knew that their settlement in Brazil was subject to the third condition.

*The President* said that he entirely agreed, and had for this reason at once arranged with the League Secretariat that the Brazilian reply should not be published. It had not so far been published by the League Secretariat, though M. Oliven could not, of course, say whether it had been published in Brazil.

Continuing, the President wondered whether the responsibility for repatriating or resettling the Assyrians in certain circumstances was one which the League could properly accept. It seemed to him that, at all events, it was outside the competence of the committee to accept such a responsibility on behalf of the League. It might be, indeed, that it was outside the competence of the Council itself and that the matter could only be dealt with by the Assembly. This would mean a very serious delay. He wondered whether the contingency could not be met by some sort of deposit from the Assyrians themselves, which would form a kind of fund to be used in case of necessity for their retransfer if they could not adapt themselves to Brazil.

*The Danish Representative* said that what was wanted was some form of insurance against this contingency. Perhaps some insurance company might take the risk.

*The United Kingdom Representative*, returning to the question of procedure, suggested that it might be well to leave the third condition for later discussion with the Brazilian Government, together with other details which would have to be discussed with that Government regarding the status which the Assyrians would enjoy in Brazil. It must be remembered that the Brazilian Government had been approached purely and simply on a point of principle, subject to the later discussion of details. The best procedure at present might be to thank the Brazilian Government for their reply, to recall that the question asked had been simply one of principle, and that before proceeding to a discussion of details the committee thought that it would be wise to make sure, by sending out a mission of investigation, that the Assyrians were likely to thrive in the area proposed and to become a useful element in Brazil. When the suitability of the area had thus been proved, the Brazilian Government might be in a better frame of mind to consider the modification of their third condition.

*The Danish Representative* agreed. He thought that the mention, in the third condition laid down by the Brazilian Government, of the possibility that the Assyrians might not adapt themselves to the country led, naturally, to the mission of investigation which it had been proposed to send out.

*The French Representative* also agreed. If the report of the investigation was favourable, the risk involved in accepting the third Brazilian condition would evidently be small. But he thought that the risk of the Assyrians not adapting themselves to Brazil must in any case be allowed for in the final settlement.

*The President* agreed. Even if Brazil had not made the third condition, the point was one for which he thought the committee would have had to provide. He suggested, therefore, that the committee should now consider the question of sending a mission of investigation to Brazil and the connected question of bringing Brigadier Browne to Geneva. He wondered whether this was really necessary.

*The United Kingdom Representative* recalled that, when the question had been discussed at a previous meeting, it had been decided to leave the point for Brigadier Browne's own decision. The committee had felt that if Brigadier Browne thought a visit to Geneva necessary, then such a visit should be arranged. On the other hand, the committee did not, for reasons of expense, wish to press Brigadier Browne to come to Geneva if he did not think it necessary. The United Kingdom representative said that he had sounded Brigadier Browne while in England, and found that he was strongly of opinion that he ought to be allowed to come to Geneva before proceeding to carry out a task which involved him in considerable responsibility.

*The President* agreed that this was reasonable, and asked Dr. Kerno whether there would be any objection on financial grounds.

*Dr. Kerno* said that he would consult the League Treasury, but anticipated no difficulty.



It was agreed that Brigadier Browne should be invited to come to Geneva as soon as possible, and the United Kingdom representative was asked to arrange this.

*The President* observed that the proposal to send Brigadier Browne to Brazil should be mentioned in the report to the Council. In fact, in that report, the Council might be asked to sanction the mission.

*The United Kingdom Representative* recalled that at a previous meeting the committee had accepted in principle, subject to amendment of detail, a resolution providing for Brigadier Browne's mission to Brazil. Was it not proposed to proceed with that resolution?

After a short discussion it was decided to proceed with the resolution, and to attach it to the report which would be drawn up for the Council.

The draft resolution (Annex 2) was then circulated and considered.

Some discussion took place as to whether it was in order for the Council Committee, in a resolution of this nature, passed while the Council was still sitting, to say that the cost of the investigation would be met from League funds. The resolution, as originally worded, had been drawn up at a time when the Council was not sitting, and in anticipation that the President in office would be asked to sanction the expense subject to eventual confirmation by the Council. It was generally agreed that as the Council was sitting, it might be necessary to obtain its consent for the expense involved.

*Dr. Kerno* undertook to speak to the League Treasury on this point, but it was agreed that the whole resolution might be made subject to the consent of the Council being obtained for the expense involved. It was proposed that the penultimate paragraph of the draft resolution should be transposed so as to become paragraph 8, and the rest of the resolution slightly redrafted to make it conditional upon the Council granting the necessary funds.

It was agreed that the resolution thus redrafted should be considered by the next meeting of the committee.

*The President* said that as soon as the resolution had been adopted, it would be necessary (a) to issue an official invitation to Brigadier Browne; (b) to write to the Swiss Government, asking officially that the services of M. Redard should be placed at the disposal of the committee; (c) to arrange with the president of the Nansen Office for the nomination of a representative of that office; (d) to warn the Brazilian Government by telegram of the intention of the committee to send out the investigation.

It was agreed that a draft telegram to the Brazilian Government should be drawn up for consideration at the next meeting. It was suggested that it should thank the Brazilian Government for their reply, while leaving the final decision open. It should stress the importance of a mission of investigation, to reassure both the Council Committee and the Brazilian Government themselves that the scheme was likely to prosper, and should express the hope that the Brazilian Government would therefore see no objection to the mission of investigation which the Council Committee would propose to send out subject to a decision on the subject by the Council itself.

*The French Representative* asked whether, at the same time, the telegram might not press for official confirmation of the reply received through the Spanish Ambassador at Rio.

It was decided, however, that it would be better not to press for any official reply so long as there was any question of endeavouring to induce the Brazilian Government to reconsider the third condition laid down.

#### *Replies from other Governments.*

*Dr. Kerno* distributed to the committee replies received from the Governments of Australia, New Zealand and Mexico to the communications addressed to those Governments following upon the decisions of the committee at its tenth meeting (see Annexes 3, 4, 5 and 6).

#### *Possible Settlement in the Argentine.*

*The President* called attention to a document received from the Nansen Office (Annex 7) regarding a preliminary offer for the settlement of the Assyrians made by a private company in the Argentine. He asked whether the committee would wish to examine this offer at the present stage. Personally, he feared that it would only cause delay if the committee began negotiations with the Argentine Government on the basis of this offer and suspended the scheme for settlement in Brazil meanwhile.

*The United Kingdom Representative* recalled that the Argentine Government had already been approached officially by the League Secretariat as a result of the decisions of the committee at its tenth meeting, and it seemed premature to discuss this new scheme until the reply of the Argentine Government had been received and it was known whether that Government was prepared in principle to accept the Assyrians.

*The French Representative* said that the distance of the area proposed, the cost of settlement in that area, and the climate seemed very much the same as in the case of the Parana scheme, and he therefore saw no advantage in suspending the consideration of the Brazilian scheme while the new offer was being examined.

It was agreed to keep the offer for further examination if necessary, but not to go into it further until the attitude of the Argentine Government was known.

*Dr. Kerno* said that the agent of the company concerned in Switzerland had a film of the colony, which he was prepared to show to the committee if required.

#### *Situation of Assyrians in Iraq.*

*The President* said that two communications from the Iraqi Government had been circulated as C/Min.Ass./16 and 17. As time was short, he proposed that these documents should be considered at a further meeting, and he understood that Major Thomson, who had been closely connected with the subject matter of the two documents, had come to Geneva in the capacity of an expert attached to the Iraqi delegation. He thought it would be most useful if the committee could have the opportunity of discussing the documents in Major Thomson's presence. It would be preferable if this could be arranged in a private session, i.e., without the Iraqi delegate. He suggested that this should be left to the United Kingdom representative to arrange.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that he would do his best to arrange this. At the same time, he felt bound to warn the committee that it might be extremely difficult to secure Major Thomson's presence if the Iraqi delegate were not himself also present. The committee would be aware that a new permanent delegate had been appointed in the person of Taufiq Beg Suwaidi, and the United Kingdom representative had formed the impression that Taufiq Beg would be very reluctant to allow Major Thomson to attend a meeting of the committee alone.

*The French Representative* said that the crucial question was that of money, and he thought that the time had come to address precise enquiries to the Iraqis on this subject.

It was arranged that the committee should hold its next private meeting on the 16th January at 10 A.M., and that at 11.30 the representatives of the Nansen Office and of the Iraqi delegation should be invited to attend. The private meeting should be devoted to an examination of the documents referred to above from the Iraqi Government, the question of finance, and the question of the report to be presented to the Council.

J. C. STERNDAL BENNETT.

Geneva, January 15, 1934.



## Annex 1 to Enclosure.

*Télégramme du Ministère des Affaires étrangères d'Espagne, communiqué par M. López Olivan, le 9 Janvier 1934, au sujet de l'Etablissement des Assyriens au Brésil.*

Le Brésil accepte la totalité des Assyriens, par groupes de 500 familles par mois au fur et à mesure que la compagnie anglaise "Parana Plantation" pourra procéder à leur installation et aux conditions suivantes: qu'ils soient agriculteurs, qu'il n'y ait pas de frais pour le pays et que la compagnie accepte la responsabilité, dans le cas d'inadaptation, de prendre à ses frais, soit leur rapatriement, soit leur établissement dans un autre pays.

## Annex 2 to Enclosure.

*Draft Resolution.*

The Committee,

Considering that, in view of the exceptional nature of the problem with which it is confronted, it would be assuming a grave responsibility if, before taking a decision regarding the project for the settlement on land in Brazil at the disposal of Parana Plantations (Limited) of those Assyrians who may wish to leave Iraq, it did not take steps to satisfy itself as to the suitability for this particular purpose of the area concerned, by means of an independent and impartial investigation on the spot, conducted by some person specially qualified to form an opinion by reason of his knowledge of Assyrian needs and characteristics:

Decides to invite Brigadier J. G. Browne, C.M.G., C.B.E., D.S.O., until recently the Officer Commanding the Assyrian Levies in Iraq, to proceed to Brazil on its behalf as soon as possible, and to report to the committee by telegram, after local investigation, whether, in the light of his special knowledge, he is of opinion that the above-mentioned scheme offers such prospect of success that there is good reason to believe that the Assyrians will thrive under the scheme and become a useful element in Brazil. In the affirmative, it would be of assistance if the investigator were to indicate in a supplementary report any special considerations which, in his view, ought to be taken into account in settling the Assyrians.

The committee considers that it would be of assistance to the investigator to be accompanied by a diplomatic or consular officer with local knowledge, and, bearing in mind the special qualifications of the counsellor of the Swiss Legation in Rio de Janeiro, decides to request the Swiss Government to be good enough to permit the services of M. Redard to be utilised in this manner.

Furthermore, the committee, recognising the advantage which it might be to the investigator to have the benefit also of the advice of an expert in settlement work, gratefully accepts the offer of the president of the Nansen Office to nominate such an expert to accompany the investigator at the expense of the Nansen Office.

The committee authorises its president to acquaint the Brazilian Government with the proposal to conduct an investigation, and requests the Nansen Office to inform Parana Plantations (Limited) also, in order that the necessary local arrangements may be made.

The cost of the investigation, apart from the expenses of the expert nominated by the president of the Nansen Office, will be met from League funds.

The committee requests the League Secretariat to furnish the investigator with all available information which may assist him in the accomplishment of his task.

## Annex 3 to Enclosure.

*Australian Government Representative to Deputy Secretary-General, League of Nations.*

*Australia House, London,  
December 19, 1933.*

Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 30th November, addressed to the High Commissioner for Australia, regarding the question of the settlement of such Assyrians as may desire to leave Iraq, I am directed to inform you that Mr. Bruce had hoped to have sent you earlier a reply on this matter, but found it necessary first to consult the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia.

The High Commissioner is now awaiting a reply to a cablegram that he has despatched to his Government on the subject, and upon receipt of that reply you will be further communicated with.

I am, &c.  
(For Official Secretary),  
(Copy unsigned).

## Annex 4 to Enclosure.

*Australian Government Representative to Deputy Secretary-General, League of Nations.*

*Australia House, London,  
December 21, 1933.*

Dear Sir,

I desire to refer to your letter of the 30th November, addressed to the High Commissioner, and my reply thereto of the 19th December, 1933, on the subject of the possible settlement in Australia of such Assyrians as may desire to leave Iraq.

I am directed to inform you that His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia have given this matter careful consideration, but, in view of unemployment consequent upon the prevailing economic depression, it has been found necessary to restrict greatly the admission of aliens into Australia. In these circumstances, I am to express regret that it is not practicable to absorb the Assyrians to whom your letter of the 30th November refers.

Yours faithfully,  
(Copy unsigned),  
Official Secretary.

## Annex 5 to Enclosure.

*New Zealand Government Representative to Deputy Secretary-General, League of Nations.*

*London, December 11, 1933.*

Sir,

With further reference to your letter of the 30th ultimo, regarding the settlement of such Assyrians as may desire to leave Iraq, I am directed by the High Commissioner to inform you that he has to-day received a reply to the cablegram which he addressed to the New Zealand Government. It is as follows:—

"With reference to your telegram of the 6th December, New Zealand Government much regret they can see no prospect of settlement of Assyrians in this Dominion."

I have, &c.  
(Copy unsigned),  
Official Secretary.

## Annex 6 to Enclosure.

*Mexican Minister at Paris to Secretary-General, League of Nations.*

M. le Secrétaire général,

*Paris, le 11 décembre 1933.*

J'ai l'honneur d'accuser réception de votre communication du 30 novembre, ainsi que des documents que vous avez bien voulu y joindre, relative à l'établissement d'Assyriens en dehors de l'Irak.

Etant donné qu'il n'y a pas assez de temps pour compter sur une réponse des autorités de mon pays avant le 15 janvier, je me permets de vous anticiper que, en principe, le Gouvernement du Mexique, pour des raisons économiques spéciales, n'envisagerait pas favorablement l'établissement sur son territoire des Assyriens qui exprimeraient le désir d'abandonner leur pays.

Sous réserve de revenir sur ce sujet dès que j'aurai reçu une réponse de mon Gouvernement, je vous prie, &c.

Le Ministre,  
F. CASTILLO NAJERA.



## Annex 7 to Enclosure.

*Preliminary Settlement Offer made by an Argentine Company in Misiones, Argentina, to the Nansen International Office for Refugees.*

(Confidential.)

*Situation of Property.*

Latitude 26-27°: 10 miles from Parana River, navigable from Buenos Aires, in colony in existence ten years and already occupied by 2,000 German settlers.

The exact situation of the property is marked in green on the back page of the attached pamphlet.<sup>(1)</sup>

*References.*

Swiss Emigration Office, which has authorised Dr. Fuchs of Zurich to open a propaganda bureau; British Ambassador and Swiss Minister, Buenos Aires; Pastor Jean Schorrer and M. René Turretini, of Geneva, who have visited colony.

*Description of Land and Colony.*

The company owns 250,000 hectares of land. This land is stated to consist of virgin forest, first-class soil, covered with valuable timber, with an abundance of small streams and no danger of floods or drought. There are schools, churches, doctors, choirs and other rural entertainments, as well as shops, sawmills, carpenters, blacksmiths, wheelwrights, &c.

In this and adjoining colonies owned by the company, there are 10,000 inhabitants of thirty-four different nationalities, including Austrians, Czechoslovaks, Dutch, English and Germans.

*Climate.*

The temperature ranges from - 2° to 38°.

Rainfall, 1,500-2,000 mm. per annum.

*Produce.*

The land is stated to be very suitable for the cultivation of yerba maté, a large variety of fruits, including bananas, pineapples, oranges, lemons, melons and grapes; maize, manioc, sugar-cane, lentils, potatoes and many other vegetables; rice, tung for wood-oil, and a number of vegetable oils. Sub-tropical timber of all descriptions.

*Cattle-raising, Pig-breeding, Poultry-farming and Bee-keeping.*

These are stated to be very profitable industries in Misiones, with ready markets.

*Means of Communication.*

There is a service of boats, up to 200 tons, on the Parana River, twice weekly throughout the year, from Buenos Aires.

Posadas, the capital of Misiones, a town of 20,000 inhabitants and connected by railway and river with Buenos Aires and the principal commercial centres of the country, is about 200 kilom. from the colony.

*Alternative Offers.*

1. Sale of land for the settlement of 2,000 families, the settlement work to be carried out by the Nansen Office: 40,000 hectares at 25 paper pesos per hectare = £65,750.

2. Settlement cost for 2,000 families, including 20 hectares of land per family, simple shacks, necessary live-stock, and generally to make them self-supporting: 2,000 paper pesos per family, or £263,000.

*Transport.*

As for Parana Plantations.

NOTE.—The comparative offers made by Parana Plantations (Limited) were—

1. 24,200 hectares ...	£65,000
2. Total settlement cost ...	£204,000

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

*Finance.*

The company is stated to be financed by the Tornquist Bank.

*Reimbursement of Advances.*

The company estimates that colonists should be in a position to reimburse advances made to them within ten years, commencing at the end of the second year.

*Time Factors.*

The company state that their organisation would enable them to receive from 200 to 2,500 families this year, given reasonable notice.

N.B.—A film of the colony is at the disposal of the committee.

[E 491/1/93]

No. 111.

*United Kingdom Delegate to Foreign Office.—(Received January 22.)*

(No. 19.)

THE United Kingdom delegate to the League of Nations presents his compliments, and has the honour to transmit copies of a record of the fourteenth meeting of the Council Committee, on the 16th January, respecting the Assyrian question, of which a copy has been sent to His Majesty's Ambassador, Bagdad.

*United Kingdom Delegation,  
Geneva, January 19, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 111.

ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

*Record of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Council Committee, held at 10 A.M. on January 16, 1934.*

*Reply to Brazilian Government.*

THE committee had before it the draft of a telegram to the Spanish Ambassador at Rio de Janeiro (Annex 1).<sup>(1)</sup>

The President proposed that paragraph 2 of this draft should mention the persons who would collaborate with Brigadier Browne in the capacity of advisers.

The French Representative proposed that there should be inserted in the telegram a sentence thanking the Spanish Ambassador at Rio de Janeiro on behalf of the committee for the part which he had played in securing the change of the Brazilian Government's attitude.

The United Kingdom Representative suggested that the first paragraph, which spoke of the committee being convinced that it would be possible to arrive at a complete understanding with the Brazilian Government regarding conditions of settlement, was somewhat too definite. He proposed that the telegram should be modified so as to merely express the hope that it would be possible to arrive at a complete understanding. He also suggested that, to make it still more clear that the committee intended to discuss further the conditions laid down by the Brazilian Government, a phrase should be added to the second paragraph of the telegram to the effect that, before proceeding to discuss the matter in further detail, the committee thought it best to make sure, by sending out the mission of investigation, that the scheme was likely to prove suitable.

The United Kingdom Representative also suggested that it was undesirable in the last paragraph to ask the Brazilian Government definitely for their consent to the despatch of the proposed mission.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.



There was general agreement, and, after various suggestions had been made, the Danish representative proposed that the committee should simply express the hope that the Brazilian Government would facilitate the task of Brigadier Browne and his associates.

The draft telegram, as amended in the above sense and eventually adopted, is attached as Annex 2.<sup>(1)</sup>

*Resolution regarding Mission to Brazil.*

Dr. Kerno said that he had discussed with the League Treasury the passage in the draft resolution considered by the committee on the 15th January regarding the expense of the proposed mission to Brazil. The opinion of the Treasury was that it was not necessary to approach the President of the Council on this matter, and that it was not necessary to make a special request to the Council to sanction the expenditure in question. It would be sufficient to embody the resolution in the committee's report to the Council, and the Council's resolution approving the report would have to contain a sentence authorising the proposed expenditure.

Dr. Kerno suggested a corresponding amendment to the draft resolution, and it was decided that the draft, amended as suggested, should be circulated in due course, but should be regarded forthwith as passed. (The resolution in its final form is attached as Annex 3.)<sup>(1)</sup>

The United Kingdom Representative informed the committee that, as authorised at the previous sitting, he had telephoned to Brigadier Browne, and had arranged for him to arrive in Geneva on the morning of Thursday, the 18th January.

*Situation of Assyrians in Iraq.*

The President invited the committee to consider what questions, if any, arising out of documents C./Min.Ass./16 and 17 it would be advisable to put to Tawfiq Beg Suwaidi, the new Iraqi permanent delegate, and to Major Thomson.

The United Kingdom Representative reported that he had seen Tawfiq Beg Suwaidi the previous evening and had invited him to meet the committee at 11.30. He had also told him that the committee was glad to learn that Major Thomson was available, and hoped that Tawfiq Beg Suwaidi would place him at its disposal to assist the committee with his knowledge and recent experience of the Assyrians, and particularly of those in the refugee camp in Mosul. Tawfiq Beg Suwaidi had at once expressed his willingness to place Major Thomson at the disposal of the committee, but the United Kingdom representative was doubtful whether he would be willing for Major Thomson to attend a meeting of the committee without being also present himself. He suggested, however, that the president should endeavour to get Tawfiq Beg Suwaidi to confirm before the committee that Major Thomson's services were entirely at its disposal.

The President said that he proposed to ask Tawfiq Beg Suwaidi for further details regarding the situation of the Assyrians in Northern Iraq, and particularly regarding that of the refugees in the Mosul camp, as the report on the latter subject furnished by the Iraqi Government only covered the period ending the 30th November. The president also asked whether the committee thought it opportune that he should ask the Iraqi delegate what financial contribution the Iraqi Government proposed to make. An alternative was to leave the matter for the report to the Council, so that the Council might put some pressure on the Iraqi Government, which would be more effective than anything which the committee could do. He was rather in favour of leaving the matter for the report of the Council, which would in any case have to touch on the question of finance and appeal for funds from various Governments and private charitable institutions.

The United Kingdom Representative said that in the course of his conversation the previous evening with Tawfiq Beg Suwaidi he had broached the question of finance, and had urged the importance of the Iraqi Government, as having the greatest interest in the settlement of the Assyrian problem, making a really generous contribution. Otherwise the settlement scheme might break down

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

and the Assyrian problem would remain unsolved, to the great inconvenience of the Iraqi Government. Tawfiq Beg Suwaidi had on his side stressed the difficulty in which the Iraqi Government found themselves in deciding on a definite amount for their contribution so long as certain details were not yet precisely fixed. It would be much better for the Iraqi Government that the number of Assyrians who wished to move should be established and the exact cost of the operation ascertained before they suggested to the Iraqi Parliament a definite sum. The Iraqi contribution in such circumstances was likely to be bigger than if the Iraqi Government were pressed at once to state how much they would contribute.

The French Delegate expressed his preference also for leaving the matter to be dealt with in the report to the Council. The committee had been charged, in the first place, with the task of finding a destination for the Assyrians. This first stage had now, to all intents and purposes, been reached and it must be emphasised to the Council that the next step was to decide how the scheme would be financed. The Council, with its authority, ought to recall to the Government of Iraq that, in demanding a substantial contribution, the Council was not asking for a benevolence, but was asking the Iraqi Government to fulfil a responsibility, since it was the Iraqi Government which was most closely concerned with the question.

The United Kingdom Representative said that he agreed that it might be left to the Council to bring pressure upon the Iraqis. He thought, however, that the committee ought at least to ask the Iraqi delegate, without pressing him, whether he was yet in a position to state what his Government were prepared to contribute. It seemed necessary to make this enquiry in order to have something on which to base the report of the Council on this point.

The President agreed. He recalled that a letter had already been addressed to the Iraqi delegate on this point and it had so far remained without answer. The best course was to confirm that the Iraqi delegate was still not in a position to give the answer of his Government, and afterwards to point out to the Council the necessity of bringing pressure to bear on that Government.

Dr. Kerno, with reference to document C./Min.Ass./16, observed that it embodied a report by Major Thomson which covered only the period up to the 30th November last. Later information, however, had been received from the Mar Shimun in the form of the petition of the 11th January, which had been circulated as C./Min.Ass./19.

The President said that the Mar Shimun had recently been to see him. The Patriarch had complained of the composition of the local committee in Iraq and had alleged that it could not possibly be impartial. He had also emphasised the sufferings which his people in Iraq were still undergoing. In fact, he had said that they were being massacred, though he had corrected himself to the extent of saying that it was not by the sword but by starvation and destitution. The president had informed the Mar Shimun, with regard to the first point, that the committee had done its best, but the Mar Shimun must remember that it was dealing with the Government of an independent country, a member of the League of Nations, and could not therefore impose conditions upon that Government. It was a question of mutual arrangement. The president said he had purposely not entered into the second point raised by the Mar Shimun. It was desirable not to give the Patriarch the status of a party to the dispute, and to treat him as a Government. He had made it clear that he could not discuss the allegations made by the Mar Shimun (which had been couched in exaggerated language), but could only listen to them. He had pointed out, however, that it was always open to him to address a letter to the Council Committee. The letter of the 14th January (see Annex 4 (1)), of which the Mar Shimun had sent copies to the various members of the committee, supplementing his petition of the 11th January, was no doubt the result.

Dr. Kerno said that the Mar Shimun had also been to see him and had spoken in the same sense as to the president. He had particularly insisted that the procedure contemplated in Iraq was not satisfactory. Major Thomson could not be regarded as impartial. Dr. Kerno had replied that the committee had taken precautions. They had arranged for the Assyrian headman in each village to become a member of the local committee. The Mar Shimun had said that the



headmen would be useless. They would be terrorised and even massacred. Dr. Kerno had then referred to the presence on the committee of a Nansen representative. The Mar Shimun had replied that the Nansen representative would be submerged by the rest of the committee. Dr. Kerno then said that it was quite impossible for the Council Committee to assume in advance that the machinery set up in collaboration with the Iraqi Government was not going to work, and, if any injustice occurred, the Nansen representative would be on the spot and would be able to report to the Council Committee, who could then consider other measures.

*The President* said that it was obviously impossible for the committee to ignore the Mar Shimun's fears and allegations. At the same time, he thought that it would be a mistake to attach too much importance to them and to obscure the issue by going into them in detail.

*The Danish Representative* agreed. At the same time he suggested that, in talking to the Iraqi representative and Major Thomson, the committee must assure itself that conditions were not and would not be as stated by the Mar Shimun. In the reports presented by the Iraqi Government the situation was described as satisfactory. The committee must ask for further details and press the Iraqi Government to do everything possible to relieve the situation of the Assyrians pending transfer.

*The President* asked whether the committee thought it useful to consider the possibility of sending the Nansen representative to Iraq at an earlier stage than had so far been contemplated.

*Dr. Kerno* pointed out that under the resolution of the 31st October it was provided that the Nansen representative should only go to Iraq as soon as possible after the place of settlement had been definitely fixed.

*The French Representative* said that he thought that under the terms of the resolution of the 31st October the Nansen representative could not be sent to Iraq at least until Brigadier Browne's report of his mission to Brazil had been received.

*The United Kingdom Representative* recalled that the resolution of the 31st October had been prepared by negotiation with the Iraqi Government, and, if it was proposed to depart from its terms, such departure could only be by agreement with the Iraqi Government. Whether it was necessary for the committee to seek that agreement was for decision. There were certainly disquieting reports about the state of the Assyrians in the north. There was, in the first place, the refugee camp in Mosul, and it would be necessary for the committee to satisfy themselves by questioning Major Thomson that conditions in this camp were satisfactory. In addition, there were a good many Assyrians who had left their villages and flocked into Mosul outside the refugee camp. So far as his information went, the United Kingdom representative said that he did not understand these refugees to be at present in a state of actual destitution, though obviously their conditions might be better. He understood that they were being lodged and kept by the Assyrians permanently resident in Mosul, but there was always a chance of this system breaking down if the refugees insisted on remaining in Mosul indefinitely and refused to go back to their villages. It was alleged that their reluctance to return to the villages was due to unsatisfactory arrangements by the Iraqi Government for their security and to insufficient payment of compensation. That was one side of the question. On the other side it was alleged that the Assyrians in Mosul were themselves chiefly to blame for their present condition, and that their refusal to go back to their villages was simply due to the fact that they had got it into their heads that they were to be transferred almost immediately and were waiting for something to be done for them. It was desirable to question the Iraqi delegate on this point, and it might be necessary, at some stage, to urge the Iraqi Government to do everything possible to arrange for the Assyrians to return to their villages in security and to compensate them for losses.

*The President* recalled that in his letter of the 14th January the Mar Shimun had suggested the despatch to Iraq of a mission from the International Red Cross Society to relieve distress. The president had reason to believe that

the Mar Shimun might approach the International Red Cross direct, and he wondered whether the Council Committee ought to pass some resolution recommending the despatch of such a mission. On the whole he was opposed to this step, which he thought might create serious difficulties with the Iraqi Government.

*The United Kingdom Representative* expressed the view that the committee should act very cautiously in this matter. If there were real reason to believe that a Red Cross mission was essential, naturally it would be the duty of the Council Committee to facilitate it as far as possible. There were, however, two reasons against sending out a mission unless it was proved to be essential. In the first place, the upkeep of the destitute Assyrians in Mosul was a responsibility which devolved upon the Iraqi Government, and this responsibility ought to remain squarely upon that Government. If any mission were sent out the Iraqi Government might wash their hands of the whole affair. In the second place, the effect on the Assyrians themselves had to be considered. There was little doubt that a large number of the Assyrians at all events were simply hoping that, if they made enough of their difficulties, a camp would be provided for them like the one in which they had lived for some four years after the war at Baquba. The United Kingdom representative suggested that for these reasons the committee ought to hear what Major Thomson had to say before proceeding any further.

It was decided to proceed accordingly.

The committee then considered document C./Min.Ass./17.

*The President* pointed out that in paragraph 6 of that document the attention of the Council Committee was drawn to four categories of Assyrians whose treatment would require special consideration.

The president recalled that the questions raised had been already considered to some extent by the committee, and the most difficult seemed to be the category of non-agriculturalists. He thought, however, that the treatment of this category would eventually solve itself. When a nucleus of agriculturalists had been settled in Brazil, they would create new wants and new employment, which might dispose of those Assyrians now in Iraq who followed some employment other than agriculture.

It was agreed to leave consideration of these four categories for the time being, but to ask the Iraqi delegation for further particulars regarding the numbers of each category if possible.

*The United Kingdom Representative* pointed out that there was the question raised by paragraph 5 of the document under consideration. That paragraph recommended that two places of settlement should be found. The United Kingdom representative suggested that the committee could hardly do anything but proceed on the line which they had been following. Their task had been to find a single area large enough to accommodate all the Assyrians in Iraq if they wished to leave. Once the area had been found, the scheme could be submitted to the Assyrians, and those who wished to take advantage of it (presumably the Mar Shimun and his followers) would do so. The most urgent part of the question would then be solved. It was just possible, in any case, that if a single scheme were put before the Assyrians, and it were clear that no alternative was in sight, those who did not follow the Mar Shimun might decide after all to make the best of it and accept it. If, however, as feared by the Iraqi Government, they took the line that they still wished to leave Iraq, but could not follow the Mar Shimun, then it would be for the Council Committee to try to find a second area.

*The Danish Representative* noted that the document referred to the impossibility of certain Assyrians going to a place under the influence of the Mar Shimun. He did not think that the committee could concern itself with questions of this sort. It was natural, of course, that the committee should ask the Brazilian Government to give the Assyrians the right to follow their religion, but to get for the Mar Shimun the full powers which he claimed over his people was not the task of the committee; nor was it its task to divide the followers of the Mar Shimun from the rest.



*The President* suggested that a written reply ought to be sent to the points raised by the Iraqi Government.

*The Danish Representative* suggested that, if a reply were sent, the point might be made that if there were two settlements it would cost the Iraqi Government more.

*The President* suggested that a reply should be drafted on the lines of what the United Kingdom representative had said, to the effect that the first object of the committee was to find a single area in which all the Assyrians could be settled, and that the question of what was to be done with those who felt they could not accompany the Mar Shimun would have to be dealt with as and when it arose.

It was agreed that a draft reply to the Iraqi Government should be prepared in this sense.

#### *Draft Report to the Council.*

At the previous meeting, Dr. Kerno had distributed a rough preliminary draft of a report from the committee to the Council and the committee now proceeded to consider this draft. A number of amendments were suggested and it was eventually decided to set up a drafting committee to prepare the report; the drafting committee to consist of the president, the United Kingdom, French and Danish representatives.

The sitting was then suspended for a few minutes and was resumed on the arrival of the Iraqi permanent delegate, accompanied by Major Thomson and M. Shabandar, and of the President and Secretary-General of the Nansen Office.

*The President*, after welcoming the Iraqi delegate, explained generally the present position of the question. He emphasised the difficulty which the committee had encountered in finding a suitable destination for the Assyrians. In the present economic condition of most countries this was inevitable. The committee had, however, recently learned that, subject to the discussion of details, the Brazilian Government were disposed to accept all the Assyrians at the rate of 500 families a month, as and when they could be accommodated by Parana Plantations (Limited). The committee now proposed to send out a mission to Brazil to make sure that the area proposed was likely to suit the Assyrians. The president explained the composition of the mission. He then referred to the reports which the Iraqi Government had furnished on the refugee camp at Mosul and the measures taken for the security of the Assyrians, the relief of destitution and the repair of villages. He asked if the Iraqi delegate could supplement these reports with any later details regarding the situation of the Assyrians in Iraq.

*Taufiq Beg Suwaidi* expressed appreciation of the great efforts which the committee had made since October. He was glad to hear officially that a destination had been practically found. As to the nomination of Brigadier Browne, he also appreciated this. Brigadier Browne had commanded the levies in Iraq and the knowledge which he had acquired of the Assyrians would certainly facilitate his task in Brazil. As to the situation of the Assyrians in Iraq, the committee had no doubt been sufficiently informed by the reports furnished by the Iraqi Government, and he had nothing to add to those reports. The position remained unchanged. To return to the question of settlement, it only remained to await the report of Brigadier Browne before ascertaining the number of Assyrians who would wish to leave Iraq. Once the question of the adaptation of the Assyrians to Brazil and the numbers of Assyrians who wished to go had been ascertained, the Iraqi Government would be in a position to consider the situation as a whole.

*The President* said that this led him to mention the question of finance. He recalled that a letter had been addressed to the Iraqi delegation some time ago about the Iraqi financial contribution. Was the Iraqi delegate now in a position to reply?

*The Iraqi Representative* said that when the Iraqi Government had considered the question of finance the two points which he had already mentioned were still outstanding. Until it was known that Brazil was suitable and

until the numbers of the Assyrians were ascertained, it was not easy for the Iraqi Government, or even for the Council Committee, to know how much the whole scheme would cost. The Iraqi Government were, therefore, somewhat embarrassed. They must wait before taking a decision until they knew the number to be settled and this in turn depended on the destination. It was necessary to wait a little, and it was impossible to decide finally at this stage how much the Iraqi Government could contribute.

*The President* asked whether the Iraqi Government would give an assurance that once the necessary details were fixed they would take all steps to ensure that there should be no delay in deciding the question of a financial contribution. He referred to the administrative and legislative machinery which would probably have to be set in motion and he would like to know that the delay involved would be reduced to a minimum.

*The Iraqi Representative* referred to Yasin Pasha's declaration before the Council on the 14th October last regarding the Iraqi contribution. The Iraqi Government would fulfil this declaration with the best will. They would, however, be taking considerable responsibility in promising in advance any particular contribution, since Governments were likely to fall and to be replaced. The Iraqi Government were unanimous in their readiness to liquidate the affair and to facilitate the operation of settlement. There was no change since Yasin Pasha's declaration.

*The President* took note of this declaration, of which he expressed appreciation. He then proceeded to discuss Document C./Min.Ass./17, paragraphs 5 and 6. He reserved the right of the committee to reply direct to the Iraqi Government on the points raised in this paragraph, but as regards paragraph 6 he would like to know whether the figures of the various categories were to be found in the reports which Major Thomson had made.

*Major Thomson* said that he had no precise figures of the various categories. The points mentioned in paragraph 6 of the document were points which he and the local committee had felt ought to be discussed before the Nansen representative went out to Iraq if there was not to be delay.

*The President* said that the committee would appreciate precise figures if that were possible.

*Major Thomson* promised as soon as he returned to Iraq to get the necessary figures.

*The President* then asked the president of the Nansen Committee whether he was now in a position to nominate the representative of the Nansen Office who would accompany Brigadier Browne on his mission to Brazil. Brigadier Browne was due to arrive in Geneva almost immediately, and it was desirable that he should be able to consult with the Nansen representative who would collaborate with him and arrange to travel out with him.

*M. Werner* said that he had not been present at the meeting of the Council Committee at which Brigadier Browne had been chosen. He had intended to appoint Major Johnson as the Nansen Office representative, and he would still be inclined to do so, but he wished first to ask whether the question of nationality was not an obstacle. Was it desirable that the mission should consist of two British subjects?

*The President* said that the Council had already considered this question and felt that nationality was no obstacle. These two British subjects would go out as servants of the League.

*M. Werner* said that in that case he would nominate Major Johnson and the Nansen Office would pay Major Johnson's expenses. He would eventually get this decision confirmed by the managing board of the Nansen Office, but meanwhile would take full responsibility for it.

*The President* then asked the Iraqi representative whether he desired to make any comments.



*The Iraqi Representative* said that, *à propos* of the question of finance, he noted that a resolution passed by the Council Committee on the 31st October last had provided that the local committee in Iraq, in collaboration with a representative of the Nansen Office, should examine the question of the participation by the Assyrians themselves in the cost of settlement. He felt that there should be an obligatory contribution to the initial expenses from those Assyrians who could afford to pay. He said that the Assyrians had a considerable amount of property in the shape of herds, land, &c., and he suggested that they should be divided into four categories, according to their ability to pay. The first category should be obliged to pay in advance one-half of the estimated cost, the second category should pay one-third, the third one-fourth, while the fourth category would consist of those Assyrians who had no means, who could not afford to pay anything, and to whom it might even be necessary to grant an exemption of a certain percentage of the ultimate cost, say, 10 per cent. or 15 per cent. If some scheme of this sort were not adopted and the Assyrians gained the impression that they could, if they wished, go free to Brazil, every one of them would say that he was insolvent.

The second point which the Iraqi representative wished to make was that it seemed unnecessary to await the report of Brigadier Browne regarding Brazil before sending a representative of the Nansen Office to Iraq to make preliminary arrangements of the type which he had suggested.

*The President* said that the committee would consider the suggestion which the Iraqi representative had made regarding an obligatory contribution from the Assyrians according to their means. He suggested it would be preferable, however, if the Iraqi representative would put his suggestion into writing. The second point regarding the despatch of the Nansen representative to Iraq was governed by the committee's resolution of the 31st October. The committee had, in fact, discussed the advisability of sending out a Nansen representative at an earlier stage than had been contemplated in that resolution, but thought it best to wait. Now, however, that the earlier despatch of the Nansen representative had been proposed by the Iraqi representative, the committee would, of course, reconsider the matter.

The president added that the committee was very glad that Major Thomson was present, and he was sure that the committee would like to have information from Major Thomson, who, with his special knowledge of the Assyrians, could be of great assistance. He therefore asked the Iraqi representative to place Major Thomson at the disposal of the committee.

*The Iraqi Representative* said that he gladly agreed.

*M. Werner* said that, if it was proposed to send a Nansen representative to Iraq, he would like the matter to be arranged quickly before Major Johnson went to Brazil, as he would require Major Johnson's advice and help in making the necessary arrangements.

J. C. STERNDAL BENNETT.

January 16, 1934.

[E 511/1/93]

No. 112.

*United Kingdom Delegate to Foreign Office.*—(Received January 23.)

(No. 23.)

THE United Kingdom delegate to the League of Nations presents his compliments, and has the honour to transmit copy of a record of the fifteenth meeting of Assyrian Committee of the Council on the 17th January, of which a copy has been sent to His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad.

*United Kingdom Delegation,  
Geneva, January 21, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 112.

# ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

*Record of the Fifteenth Meeting of the Council Committee at 4 P.M. on  
January 17, 1934.*

THE committee met first in private, and with particular reference to the communications from the Iraqi Government contained in Documents C/Min.Ass./16 and C/Min.Ass./17, and to the Mar Shimun's letter in Document C/Min.Ass./19, decided on the questions to be put to the Iraqi representative, who with Major Thomson joined the meeting at 5 P.M.

*The President* then recalled to the Iraqi delegate that the committee had a double task. Its first duty was to arrange for the resettlement of the Assyrians outside Iraq, but in addition to this the Council had entrusted it with the duty of receiving reports from the Iraqi Government regarding the measures taken to ensure the security of the Assyrians, to relieve those rendered destitute by the events of last August and to repair the villages partially or wholly destroyed during the same events. It had taken note of the report furnished by the Iraqi Government of the 21st December (Document C/Min.Ass./16). In anticipation of the report which it would have to furnish to the Council and also to acquit its own conscience, the committee desired to ask certain questions and to obtain supplementary details. In the first place, the committee had noted that Major Thomson's report, which the Iraqi Government had enclosed, was only for the period up to the 30th November last. It would be of interest to know whether there were any modifications since that date.

*The Iraqi Delegate* said that he would ask Major Thomson to reply to this question.

*Major Thomson* said that he had later information, which had been sent to him since his departure from Iraq, though it only went up to the 1st January. Up to that date there were in the camp 1,505 men, women and children. A certain number had left to join their friends outside. From the 21st December to the end of the year, one man and twelve children had died.

In response to a question by the Danish representative, who asked whether this rate of mortality was not alarmingly high, Major Thomson said that the deaths of the children were due to bronchial pneumonia following whooping cough, and were attributable entirely to the negligence of the mothers themselves who refused to let their children remain in hospital in Mosul.

*The President* referred to a phrase in paragraph 3 of the Iraqi report which referred to the general improvement in the situation. He asked whether this improvement referred to security or to health.

*Major Thomson* said that questions of security and police measures were not within his competence, and he must ask the Iraqi delegate to reply to this point.

*The Iraqi Delegate* regretted that he also was not in a position to reply to this particular question, or to explain details regarding police measures. The report had been prepared just after he had left Iraq on his way to Europe. He could of course refer the president's question to the Iraqi Government, but himself read the phrase in question as meaning that, after the events of last summer, a certain tension had naturally existed, but that lately the feeling of security had improved.

*The President* noted that Major Thomson's report stated that it had been found necessary to admit into the refugee camp, at Mosul, some seventy men, who were destitute through blindness, paralysis, loss of limbs or old age. The committee would be glad to know why it had been necessary to admit this class of person to the camp, and whether it was suitable that they should be there.

*Major Thomson* explained that the men in question were living with their families in villages and had been supported by those families. He had found



them destitute in Dohuk or Al Qosh and unable to support themselves. For the sake of humanity, therefore, he had taken them into the camp, which had been primarily intended for women and children. They had, in fact, nowhere else to go.

*The President* observed that if the Assyrians were settled outside Iraq, the case of these people, who were not physically fit to emigrate, would naturally arise. What did the Iraqi Government propose to do about this?

*The Iraqi Delegate* said that unfortunately Iraq suffered from a lack of charitable institutions. An institution for the reception of people who were physically incapacitated was, in fact, being built in the neighbourhood of Mosul, and, if it were ready in time, the men in question could, he imagined, be admitted there. He submitted, however, that the question was a secondary one, as when emigration took place these men would either accompany their families or would have to be treated in the same way as other indigent persons.

*The President* said that the number of houses and tents in the refugee camp in Mosul seemed somewhat small for the large number of people to be accommodated. Was there not over-crowding?

*Major Thomson* explained that the camp was composed partly of houses and partly of double-fly tents holding 23 to 25 people each. Inside each tent he had made the refugees build mud walls 2 feet high, which prevented the wind from coming in. There was in addition a large church tent, and he had started a school there for the children. There was also an ablution tent with as much hot water as was required for baths.

*The United Kingdom Representative* pressed the question of over-crowding. Was not the number of persons per tent excessive?

*Major Thomson* replied that the truth was that the families refused to split up. If he tried to diminish the number in a tent they refused to separate and, if removed, went back again. He was convinced, however, that the conditions were not unhealthy, and as an interesting example he said that there had been an outbreak of diphtheria. There had been twelve cases among the children, but the disease had been stamped out in fifteen days.

*The Danish Representative* noted that the number of deaths up to the 30th November was stated in *Major Thomson's* report as seventy. Was not this a very high percentage?

*Major Thomson* admitted that the number seemed alarming, but it was not in fact excessive. Some 2,000 persons had passed through the camp, and the deaths mostly occurred among children who were in a very weak condition on being admitted. Most of them had been young children, nursed by their mothers, who themselves had been in want of food for several days. It was a particularly hot time of the year, and a great many of the children who came in were in such a condition that he personally had never thought they would live. Many of them had, however, survived and they had all received every attention. He thought that the death-rate, if compared with that in the poor quarters in European towns, would not compare badly.

*The President* said that the committee would be glad to have some assurance regarding the future that the Iraqi Government would pay particular attention to the needs of the destitute Assyrians.

*The Iraqi Representative* said that before his departure from Bagdad, he had gone into the matter thoroughly and he would of course transmit to his Government the president's request. He could, however, say that the Iraqi Government were ready to maintain the refugee camp until the settlement operation had been finished and would be particularly careful in the matter of the security of the Assyrians and the health of those in the camp. Generally speaking, they would receive as good treatment as the rest of the population. *Major Thomson* had shown that conditions in the camp were favourable and in regard to the question of the Danish representative regarding mortality, he had to admit that infant mortality as a whole in Iraq was very high. In fact it amounted to about 40 per cent. over the whole country, generally because the

mothers were suspicious of new forms of treatment. He pointed out, however, that the Assyrians enjoyed equal facilities with the other inhabitants of Iraq in the matter of dispensaries, &c.

*The President* then referred to the petition from the Mar Shimun which had been circulated as Document C/Min. Ass./19. The committee would be glad to hear any observations which the Iraqi representative might wish to make on this petition.

*The Iraqi Representative* recalled that the Mar Shimun had now addressed many petitions to the League, and all of them contained many allegations which were completely false. The Iraqi Government had had to point this out. The present petition was no exception. It contained many falsehoods. He would only take two examples, namely, the figures quoted regarding the refugees in the Mosul camp and those who had taken refuge in Mosul outside the camp. The Mar Shimun said that there were 3,000 persons in the refugee camp. In fact, there were only 1,500. The total of 4,000 for the other category was also about twice too high. The Mar Shimun was, in fact, always quoting unchecked figures. His petition would, of course, be sent to the Iraqi Government for detailed observations.

In answer to questions regarding those Assyrians alleged to be destitute outside the refugee camp, *Major Thomson* said that these were people who had left their villages and flocked into Mosul, where they had joined their friends. These people numbered about 2,000, whereas the permanent Assyrians resident in Mosul numbered about 1,000. *Major Thomson* had himself seen the people who had come in from the villages and who were living on the permanent residents. They refused to go back to their villages. The Iraqi Government had made a definite offer to the inhabitants of the Shaikhan area, where, although there had been no massacres, the villages had been looted by the Arabs after the massacre at Simel. The people in this area had retired to Al Qosh with a good proportion of their flocks and personal property. They had, of course, been obliged to leave their crops. A British officer had since assessed the quantities of grain and crops left in the villages, and the Iraqi Government had promised that to those who would return to the villages, they would give as much grain as was necessary for cultivation, in addition to sufficient grain to maintain the persons concerned until fresh crops were grown. The Iraqi Government had also provided ploughs and other implements, household necessities and blankets. All this had been done in the case of those who had agreed to go back, but, in spite of this, there were many who still refused to go back to the villages. *Major Thomson* had himself asked that the Government should give back more rifles to the Assyrians, to increase security. The Iraqi Government had agreed to do so, and more were being issued. Police posts had also been established, and the Iraqi Government had, in fact, done everything to induce the Assyrians to go back. Those who had done so were well looked after and would prosper. He had urged upon them the necessity of cultivating, as their transfer might be somewhat delayed. The Iraqi Government had, in order to increase confidence, promised to buy any standing crops which it might prove impossible to harvest before the Assyrians left. Those who had not gone back to the villages were very largely actuated by the hope that, if they were destitute, they would be the first to be sent away from Iraq. He had, however, impressed upon them that the first settlers sent to a new land would have to be strong and healthy cultivators, and that those who had returned to the villages and were working and keeping themselves fit were far more likely to be sent in the first batch than any who were idling in Mosul. His arguments had not, however, had much effect, for the people in Mosul hoped to play upon the feelings of the Nansen representative and thus to be transferred first.

As to the condition of the refugees in Mosul outside the refugee camp, he had considered in October whether he could not get more clothing for them. He had already spent about £300 on clothing for the camp, and he had received from private charitable sources in Great Britain £150 in cash, £200 worth of clothing and £90 worth of blankets. This cash and material had either been sent, or was on the way, to *Major Wilson*, the British Administrative Inspector in Mosul, and *Major Thomson* had arranged with him that it should be used not only for the refugees in the camp, but for necessitous cases outside, in Mosul and the villages.



Major Thomson continued, however, that the Assyrians who had flocked into Mosul, although not actually in great need at the moment, would probably present a serious problem if resettlement were long delayed. The people who were supporting them had limited means. On an average, he thought perhaps one wage-earner was keeping twenty people. At present they had sufficient money and the chief burden was falling upon the men in the Iraq Levies, who were well paid. He had himself distributed gifts of £80 and £50 sent up by the Levies. As to the refugee camp, he was satisfied that conditions were satisfactory, and the problem of the other refugees was not likely to be acute for another month or six weeks. He had approached various quarters for private assistance and he was opposed to any general appeal. If such an appeal were made, all the Assyrians who had gone back to the villages would leave them, and all would pretend to be poor and flock into Mosul. A large number of them, unfortunately, preferred to live at ease rather than to work. Major Thomson hoped that he would be able to tide over the difficulty. At any rate, the action of the Iraqi Government was not in question. The Iraqi Government had paid all the money for which he had asked, and if conditions were unsatisfactory, he himself was to blame. He was sure that the Iraqi Government, if necessary, would give more than they had already done. He was, however, against any form of treating the Assyrians as destitute. The Assyrians were fond of being refugees. They had had four years at Baquba, and there had been, after that, another refugee camp at Mindan. They had, therefore, to some extent, a refugee complex.

*The Iraqi Delegate* said that he was sure that the Iraqi Government would keep conditions satisfactory pending settlement. There was one point which had not so far been touched on to which he would like to refer; that was the transfer to Syria of the families of certain Assyrians who were now in Syria. There had been negotiations with the French Government, and the Iraqi Government had received a reply, the substance of which he understood had been communicated to the Council Committee. In principle, the French Government were ready to accept the families, but one thing remained to be settled, and that concerned finance. The Iraqi Government had estimated that the question of settlement might take six months to arrange. They had therefore proposed that the French Government should take the families for six months against a payment by the Iraqi Government of a lump sum of £1,400. The French Government, on their side, did not agree. They wished to spend an indefinite sum on the refugees and present the account to the Iraqi Government afterwards. This created a budgetary difficulty for Iraq. He hoped that the French Government might accede to the Iraqi Government's request on grounds of humanity, and the Iraqi Government were prepared to pay the upkeep for so many months. He would be glad if the committee could find a way of getting out of the *impasse* and of reconciling the two points of view.

*The French Representative* said that if the Iraqi Government could not accept an indefinite liability, neither could the High Commissioner in Syria. The cost could not be borne by France and could not be charged to the Syrian budget. He would not refuse to report to his Government what the Iraqi representative had said, but the question was what was to happen after six months?

*The Iraqi Representative* said that after six months the Iraqi Government were prepared to reconsider the position. If the French Government would agree to take the families at once they could be transferred at once, and after six months the question would be again discussed if the families had not by that time been transferred elsewhere under a different scheme of settlement.

*The French Representative* said that the Syrian budget was not supported by the French Government, but by local taxpayers. The French authorities in Syria were, therefore, very anxious about the prospective burden on the budget.

*The Iraqi Representative* said that he fully realised this, but the Iraqi Government were offering to pay expenses and to consider the matter further, if necessary, after six months.

*The French Representative* said that he had no mandate to deal with this question, but he would transmit to his Government, for consideration, the suggestion that an arrangement should be made for six months, subject to reconsideration of the position, if necessary, at the end of that time.

*The Iraqi Representative* said that the Iraqi Government had supposed that there was no need for any arrangement longer than six months. They had taken what they thought would be the maximum period. He was, for his part, ready, however, to put to the Iraqi Government the same suggestion as the French representative had offered to put to his Government.

*The President* concluded the meeting by taking formal note of the assurances which he understood the Iraqi representative to have given during the course of the meeting:—

- (1) That the Iraqi Government would maintain the refugee camp until the completion of the operation of settlement;
- (2) That they would, in general, treat the Assyrians in the same manner and with the same care as the rest of the population; and
- (3) That they would pay particular attention to security and health.

J. C. STERNDAL-BENNETT.

Geneva, January 17, 1934.

[E 515/1/93]

No. 113.

#### ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

*Record of the Sixteenth Meeting of the Council Committee at 5 P.M. on January 18, 1934.—(Received in Foreign Office, January 23.)*

THIS meeting was called to adopt the draft report to the Council prepared by the Drafting Committee.

*The President* explained that the Drafting Committee had not been able to complete the report on the previous day, as there was one point which the United Kingdom representative had felt bound to refer to higher authority. The point referred to the question of finance. In the draft considered by the Drafting Committee it had been proposed, after drawing the Council's attention to the urgency of the question of finance and to the prospect of obtaining contributions from the Iraqi Government and the Assyrians themselves, merely to suggest to the Council the advisability of an appeal on humanitarian grounds to Governments and charitable institutions to make up whatever balance might be required. The United Kingdom representative had, however, drawn attention to the declaration which he had made to the committee on the attitude of the United Kingdom Government, namely, that the United Kingdom Government were prepared to pay their share of the League contribution, but could only contemplate payment as part of a League scheme. The United Kingdom representative had felt it necessary that this question of a League contribution should be dealt with and he had proposed that after the recommendation to the Council to issue an appeal to Governments and private institutions, a paragraph should be inserted in the report drawing attention to the attitude of the United Kingdom Government. Other members of the Drafting Committee had felt that to insert a paragraph to the effect that one Government, and that a Government very closely interested in the question, would only contribute on condition that all the other members of the League also contributed, would not fit in very well with the recommendation for an appeal by the Council. It would, in fact, give a perhaps unnecessarily discouraging impression of the chances of such an appeal since it was quite clear that a League contribution was impracticable. Moreover, the United Kingdom representative was perfectly entitled, if he wished, to have a reference to his declaration inserted in the report, but in that case certain members of the Drafting Committee had felt that the paragraph regarding an appeal by the Council had better be omitted.

The President understood that the United Kingdom representative had now referred the matter to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that this was so, and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs approved his attitude in pressing that the question of a League contribution should be faced. The United Kingdom representative had discussed the question privately with the president of the committee in his



capacity as representative of the *rapporteur*, and M. Oliván had eventually suggested that the best way out of the difficulty might be to keep in the committee's report the paragraph recommending an appeal and the paragraph regarding the attitude of His Majesty's Government, on the understanding that the *rapporteur*, in his report, would show that a League contribution, at all events prior to the Assembly in September next, was impracticable, and would suggest that in view of the urgency of the question there was nothing for it but for the Council to fall back upon the committee's suggestion of an appeal. The United Kingdom representative was now authorised to agree to this procedure. He suggested that after the paragraph regarding the attitude of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, the committee's report should contain a short paragraph to the effect that the Council Committee considered the question of a League contribution to be outside its competence and could only refer it, for consideration, to the Council.

This proposal was agreed to and a text was drawn up accordingly. Various other minor amendments were discussed in the rest of the report, which was eventually adopted in the form circulated to the League as document C/69.1934/VII.

January 18, 1934.

J. C. STERNDAL BENNETT.

[E 516/1/93]

No. 114.

#### ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

*Record of the Seventeenth Meeting of the Council Committee, held on January 19, at 11 A.M.—(Received January 23.)*

THIS meeting was attended by Major Johnson, and its object was to decide the points to be discussed with Brigadier-General Browne.

The President first informed the committee that he had just received a telegram from the Spanish Ambassador in Rio in reply to the telegram despatched as a result of the committee's fourteenth meeting on the 16th January. The reply was to the effect that the Brazilian Government would facilitate the work of the proposed mission. As this information had come too late for inclusion in the *rapporteur's* report, which had already been circulated, the president proposed that the *rapporteur* should inform the Council orally after the presentation of his report.

The president then explained that Major Johnson had been asked to attend this preliminary meeting in order to advise the committee on the scope of the proposed enquiry in Brazil before the committee met Brigadier Browne. The president observed that the resolution passed by the committee left considerable liberty to the investigators.

Major Johnson thanked the committee for giving him this opportunity for consultation, and he would like, in the first place, to have more precise information as to his own functions in the investigation. When the Nansen Office had first submitted the plan for settlement in Brazil, it had done so with the stipulation that it could not accept responsibility for carrying out this plan without a previous opportunity of examining on the spot its financial and technical aspects. In the Council's resolution this procedure appeared to have been somewhat reversed. Nothing was, in fact, said about the Nansen representative examining the technical and financial aspects of the proposals, but the whole enquiry seemed to be limited to ascertaining whether the area proposed was suitable for the Assyrians. Major Johnson said that, naturally, if Brigadier Browne considered the scheme unsuitable for the Assyrians, his point fell to the ground.

The President said that the object of the mission was clearly laid down in the committee's resolution. For the rest, he thought that Major Johnson had himself given the answer to his own question. The primary object of the committee at this stage was not to obtain details about the proposed settlement, but to have the opinion of someone who had personal knowledge of the Assyrians regarding the chances of their settling down in the area proposed. That was the first

question, and if the examination of the scheme on the spot showed that it was not likely to be a success the whole project fell to the ground. The committee's first idea had been to settle this most urgent question first, leaving it to the Nansen Office subsequently to examine details on the spot if the report of the Assyrian expert was favourable. In view of the urgency of the matter, however, the committee had subsequently decided to combine these two aspects. If Brigadier Browne's report was favourable, Major Johnson would, without delay, be able to examine the scheme in all its technical details on behalf of the Nansen Office.

Major Johnson said he desired to clear up one other point. In addition to the committee's resolution regarding the mission to Brazil, the Nansen Office was mentioned in another resolution of the 31st October, which contained, he thought, a passage to the effect that the eventual operation of settlement should be entrusted to the Nansen Office.

The President pointed out that this had been a decision of principle, and it was expressly stipulated in the resolution that it should be subject to conditions to be laid down eventually.

Major Johnson said that, if Brigadier Browne's report was favourable, he proposed to look into the details of the Brazilian scheme on the spot, and that all he wished to know was whether he had the committee's authority to do so.

The United Kingdom Representative pointed out that the passage in the committee's resolution of the 31st October, to which reference had been made, after deciding in principle to entrust the work of settlement to the Nansen Office under conditions to be laid down, asked the Nansen Office in the meantime, without commitment, to continue its study of the Brazilian scheme. He thought that Major Johnson's mission to Brazil followed naturally from this request. It was the president of the Nansen Office who had suggested that a representative of the office should accompany the investigator chosen by the Council Committee to Brazil at the expense of the Nansen Office. It was, therefore, natural that Major Johnson should take the opportunity to make all enquiries on the spot which his office thought necessary.

The committee then considered the points to be discussed with Brigadier Browne. For this purpose Major Johnson had drawn up two memoranda (Annexes 1 and 2). The first consisted of a list of points which he thought it might be advisable for Brigadier Browne to consider before making his report to the committee. The second contained a list of questions which would have to be considered later, assuming Brigadier Browne's report to be favourable.

Major Johnson, after explaining the various points raised in his first memorandum, asked whether, if Brigadier Browne's report was definitely unfavourable, the mission of investigation would have discretion to extend its enquiries elsewhere, for instance, to the Argentine?

The President said that this was not a point which he could answer at the moment. It was first necessary to await the reply of the Argentine Government as to their willingness in principle to accept the Assyrians. Until the consent of the Argentine Government had been obtained, it would perhaps be a waste of time to consider settlement in that country.

Some discussion then took place as to the precise rôle of the mission of investigation. Was it competent, for instance, to take up questions concerning religion and schools (see points 8 and 9 of Annex 1)? It was eventually decided that the rôle of the mission, pending further instructions, should be one of enquiry only. It would not have power to engage in negotiations. Subsequently, negotiations with the Brazilian Government would be necessary, and the most appropriate channel would no doubt be the Spanish Ambassador in Rio, assisted perhaps by the British Ambassador. It might be advisable that Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson should be available to help the Ambassadors in the course of their negotiations. This was a point to be decided later. It was agreed, however, that it would be desirable for the mission to establish contact with the two Embassies at the outset, and be placed in touch by the Spanish Embassy with such Brazilian authorities as might seem necessary.

(Brigadier Browne then joined the meeting.)



*The President* thanked him for having accepted the mission, and explained that the committee would have liked to lay down the rôle of the investigators in more detail, but found it difficult to do so, and were prepared to place their complete confidence in Brigadier Browne. What they wanted in the first place, and as soon as possible, was a general report as to whether the Assyrians were likely to thrive under the scheme. The mission was one of enquiry, and the committee would have to decide at a later stage whether it wanted the members of it to do more than make enquiries.

The president then handed to Brigadier Browne Major Johnson's two memoranda, and Brigadier Browne left the meeting for a short time with Major Johnson to consider the two documents.

While they were absent, the committee considered and approved the main lines of the communications which the League Secretariat proposed to address to the Iraqi Government regarding document C/Min.Ass/17 and to the Governments of Brazil and Switzerland in the event of the Council passing the resolution which would be proposed to it that afternoon.

Dr. Kerno was also instructed as to the nature of a formal letter to be addressed to Brigadier Browne.

*Dr. Kerno* pointed out that, although the question of the transfer to Syria of the families of the Assyrians now in that country had been discussed by the Iraqi and French representatives in the presence of the committee, the latter had not hitherto formally considered the French communication on this subject embodied in Document C/Min. Ass/18.

*The President* asked the French representative to be good enough to notify the committee of the decisions ultimately arrived at on this point.

At the request of the French representative, Dr. Kerno was instructed to record in a note, to be circulated to the committee, the above request, and the understanding of the committee that any settlement scheme for the Assyrians in Iraq should apply also to those who were now refugees in Syria.

The question of sending the Nansen Office representative to Iraq at an earlier stage than had been contemplated by the committee's resolution of the 31st October was also considered. Some apprehension was expressed lest this should complicate rather than help matters, although the advantage of having a Nansen Office representative at the earliest possible moment in Iraq was realised. It was proposed that discretion should be left with the president to arrange for the immediate despatch of a Nansen Office representative to Iraq as soon as Brigadier Browne's report was received, if that report were favourable. It was eventually decided, however, that, as the question was a difficult one, and as the committee would almost certainly have to meet in any case, immediately after the receipt of Brigadier Browne's report, to consider the many details which remained to be discussed with the Brazilian Government, the question of sending a Nansen Office representative to Iraq might be left over for the moment, in case the president felt it better that it should be considered by the committee as a whole.

*Brigadier Browne* then returned and made various observations on Major Johnson's memoranda.

As regards cultivation, he said that the Assyrians were great rice growers, and it was to that fact that was due the great prevalence of malaria among them. He proposed to enquire into the possibility of dry rice cultivation in Brazil. Many of the Assyrians were dependent on sheep farming. He understood that this had not yet been tried on the Parana lands, and he proposed to investigate the possibilities. As regards method of settlement, the Assyrians were used to living in villages of fifteen to twenty houses, and he thought it would be better to maintain this system. One of the great difficulties which he foresaw was in connexion with arms. The Assyrians possessed when he was last in Iraq some 6,000 rifles, and he thought it would be a matter of the utmost difficulty to induce them to give them up.

*The United Kingdom Representative* pointed out that, according to the latest figures supplied by the Iraqi Government, the number of rifles in the

possession of the Assyrians had dwindled greatly since the events of last August, and perhaps it might be possible to arrange for the disarmament of the Assyrians as soon as they got over the Iraqi frontier.

*Brigadier Browne* noted that the Brazilian Government were only prepared to receive agriculturalists, and this, he thought, would raise a very difficult problem, though it might be possible to deal with it on the lines of Major Johnson's proposal for an agricultural adaptation centre. The Assyrian tribes were to some extent divided according to occupation. For instance, the men of the Jelu tribe were many of them railway workers and traders; the men of the Baz tribe were builders for some part of their time. In the winter their habit was to leave their homes in the hills and go down into the towns and build houses. The men of the Diz tribe were hunters and trappers. Another question which was going to raise difficulty was the question of nationality, as many of the Assyrians had never taken out Iraqi nationality papers. A point had, he understood, been raised as to what was to happen to the old and feeble. The Assyrians regarded family ties as something almost sacred, and he thought that some arrangement would have to be made for the old and feeble to go with the rest to Brazil, where, he was sure, they would be adequately maintained by their relatives.

*The President* thanked Brigadier Browne for these observations. The questions raised in Major Johnson's second memorandum would, of course, have to wait until it was established that the area concerned was suitable.

*The Danish Representative* referred to remarks which Brigadier Browne had made regarding the difficulty of settling the Assyrians except in villages, and also regarding the difficulty of making them give up their rifles. The Danish representative wished to enter a general caveat, namely, that it might be undesirable to try to keep too closely in Brazil to conditions under which the Assyrians were living in Iraq. The main question was whether reasonably suitable conditions could be obtained for the emigrants which would enable them to settle down.

*The United Kingdom Representative* supported this attitude. While every effort must be made to get the best conditions possible for the Assyrians, it did not follow that nothing short of the ideal would be satisfactory. All emigrants had to take some chance and to adapt themselves to new conditions of life. It would, indeed, be a mistake to try to reproduce in Brazil the conditions which the Assyrians had enjoyed in Iraq, and the object was to see whether conditions in the area in question were such that the Assyrians might reasonably be expected to adapt themselves to them in time and to gain a livelihood.

The question of the date of departure of the mission was then raised.

*Major Johnson* said that there were two possible ships, one leaving Southampton on the 27th January and the other on the 9th February.

*The President* said that, naturally, the committee understood that the members of the mission required some time for their preparations. At the same time, the question was an extremely urgent one, and he could only emphasise the importance of the earliest possible departure. Even ten days might make a very great difference.

*Brigadier Browne* and *Major Johnson* said that, in the circumstances, they would make every effort to leave on the 27th January.

J. C. STERNDAL BENNETT.

Geneva, January 19, 1934.



## Annex 1.

*Questions concerning the Suitability of Conditions in Parana for the Assyrians.*

## I.—Climate.

Temperature:—

- (a) Summer: (1) maximum; (2) mean; (3) minimum.  
(b) Winter: (1) minimum; (2) mean.

Rainfall: average annual and rainy periods. Comparison of findings under paragraph I above with conditions in regions inhabited by Assyrians.

## II.—Cultivation.

Report on crops most easily cultivated in Parana, with indications showing to what extent the Assyrians are accustomed to the cultivation of those crops, or should be able, without great difficulty, to adapt themselves to their cultivation.

## III.—Cattle and Sheep Raising and Pig-Breeding.

Similar enquiries to those outlined in paragraph II.

## IV.—Agricultural Settlement Conditions.

- (1) Possibility of village settlement on conditions similar to those to which the Assyrians are accustomed.  
(2) Are 5 alqueires per family sufficient for the reasonable requirements of an Assyrian family?  
(3) Prospects of becoming self-supporting.  
(4) Feasibility of establishing two separate settlements.

## V.—Other Occupations.

Prospects of employment for other than agricultural categories, eventually by means of the creation of an agricultural adaptation centre.

## VI.—Food.

Could the reasonable food requirements of the Assyrians be satisfied at accessible prices?

## VII.—Medical Attention.

## VIII.—Religion.

Would the Assyrians be allowed facilities for the practice of their religion under the direction of their own religious leader?

## IX.—Schools.

Similar enquiry to that under paragraph VIII (Religion).

## Annex 2.

*Questions to be Considered as soon as General Browne reports on the Suitability of the Conditions in Parana for the Settlement of the Assyrians.*(A) *In the event of an affirmative report.*

(1) The Brazilian Government stipulates that only agriculturists will be received. The maintenance of that stipulation would preclude Brazil from offering a complete solution for the Assyrian problem.

Acceptance of other manual workers should be considered—possibly on condition that they complete a course in an adaptation centre which might be created in the colony.

(2) The Brazilian Government states that the colonisation company must place elsewhere Assyrians who cannot adapt themselves to the conditions in Parana. It is unusual to ask colonisation companies to accept such conditions, and it is unlikely that Parana Plantations will agree to this condition.

(3) What will be the status of the Assyrians? If they travel on Iraqi passports, the Brazilian Government, under its immigration laws, would have the right to require the Iraqi Government to repatriate "undesirables." If, however, the Assyrians are regarded as refugees and travel on Nansen passports, the Iraqi Government could only be required to agree to repatriation of any of them, if their Nansen passports are endorsed to that effect.

(4) Are any steps to be taken concerning the ultimate status of the Assyrians in Brazil? It is understood that Brazilian nationality can be obtained after six years' residence in the country.

(5) Two alternative offers are submitted by Parana Plantations:—

- (a) Settlement by the company of 10,000 Assyrians at a contract price of £194,000.  
(b) Sale of sufficient land to the Nansen Office at £65,000, the Nansen Office to effect the settlement work, as in Syria, with the co-operation of the company.

In either eventuality, it would seem to be desirable for the Nansen Office to market the Assyrians' crops (as it does in Syria for the Armenians), both in the interest of the Assyrians and of the reimbursement of advances made to them.

The estimates for the settlement cost of £129,000 must be examined in detail to ascertain whether they can be reduced in view, *inter alia*, of the more modest requirements of the Assyrians compared with those of the European colonists settled on the lands of the company.

(6) The Brazilian Government states that the reception of the Assyrians must involve it in no financial liability.

The Brazilian Government, however, normally accommodates immigrants free of charge on their arrival at a Brazilian port and provides free transport to the nearest railway station to the settlement area. Should not an effort be made to secure these facilities for the Assyrians?

(7) Parana Plantations offered to receive 10,000 Assyrians between the 15th March and the 15th September, at the rate of 1,250 every three weeks.

As it will now be impossible to contemplate the arrival of the first contingent until considerably after the 15th March, it would, perhaps, be well to examine the question of the reception of larger groups during the shorter reception period available.

(8) Any statistics which could be obtained in Iraq and cabled to Brazil concerning the numbers, occupations and constitution of families desirous of transfer to Brazil, would be most useful.

(B) *In the event of a negative report.*

Would the mission be given discretion to extend its enquiry to the settlements in Missiones and Santa Fé concerning which the Nansen Office has received offers?



## SETTLEMENT OF THE ASSYRIANS OF IRAQ.

*Seventy-Eighth Session of the Council, League of Nations.*

*Extract from the Minutes of the Fourth Meeting, held on January 19 at Geneva.—(Received in Foreign Office, January 23, 1934.)*

TEWFIQ BEG AL SUWAIDI, representative of Iraq, came to the Council table.

*M. de Madariaga* presented the following report and draft resolution:—

"My colleagues on the Council will certainly have studied with great interest the report which has been submitted to us by the Committee for the Settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq (see Annex). The mass settlement of a large population living in rather special conditions is proving to be a difficult matter in the present economic state of the world. The committee's tireless efforts enable us, however, to anticipate a satisfactory solution of the problem in the near future.

"The Council will, in the first place, wish to signify its profound gratitude to the Brazilian Government for its generous offer to throw open its territory to the population in question. It will rely on the committee to pursue its negotiations with the Brazilian Government in order to fix all the details connected with the carrying-out of the proposed plan.

"The Council will also note with satisfaction that the committee proposes to create a local body in Iraq to ensure the proper carrying-out of all the operations which will be necessary on the spot. In the same way, the despatch of Brigadier-General Browne to Brazil, assisted by M. Redard and Mr. Johnson, is a mark of the committee's desire not to take a final decision concerning the place of settlement until after an independent and impartial enquiry has been made.

"The committee specially draws the Council's attention to the difficult problem of financing the plan. The Council will be glad to note the Iraqi Government's reiterated statements that it is prepared to make as generous a contribution as its resources will permit. There can, indeed, be no doubt that the Iraqi Government's contribution will be the most important factor in the success of any emigration plan. Moreover, the Council will certainly agree to authorise the committee to study carefully the question of the payment of part of the expenditure by the Assyrian population itself.

"As regards the financing of the plan by a contribution from the League of Nations, in accordance with the suggestion of the United Kingdom representative, the *rapporteur* has given this question the most careful attention. He finds, after consultation with the competent authorities of the Secretariat, that this problem cannot be considered at the moment. Moreover, in the budget voted at the last Assembly there is no item which could be utilised for this purpose, the Financial Regulations fixed by the successive Assemblies not allowing the League to incur expenditure of this kind without a vote of the Assembly. It would therefore be necessary to wait at least until the next Assembly before any discussion on this question could usefully take place.

"In view of the urgency of the problem to which the committee draws attention, the *rapporteur* thinks that the Council should accept the committee's proposal that an appeal should be made by the Council to the Governments and to certain private organisations; such a procedure would have prospects of success, and it is to be hoped that certain Governments might consider the problem from a new aspect, particularly in view of its humanitarian nature.

"In the second part of its report, the committee submits to the Council a communication from the Iraqi Government on the measures taken for the benefit of the Assyrian population in accordance with the Council resolution of the 14th October, 1933. The committee also reports the conversations it has had in this connexion with the Iraqi delegate and with Major Thomson.

"The *rapporteur* draws the Council's attention to the assurances given to the committee by the Iraqi representative regarding the situation of the Assyrians.

"I beg to move the following resolution:—

"The Council,

"Approves the report of the committee and the present report;

"Instructs the committee to continue its work in conformity with the Council resolution of the 14th October, 1933, and with the committee's report;

"Cordially thanks the Government of Brazil for its decision to admit the Assyrian population to its territory;

"Firmly trusts that the Government of Iraq will contribute in the largest measure that its resources will permit to the financing of the scheme, in accordance with the reiterated declarations of its representatives;

"Is equally convinced that that Government will not fail to protect and aid the Assyrian population, in conformity with the declarations of its representatives in the committee;

"Appeals to the generosity of Governments and private organisations to consider participating in the financing of the scheme, having regard more especially to its humanitarian aspect;

"Authorises the Secretary-General to take, in conformity with article 33 (2) of the Financial Regulations, a sum not exceeding 20,000 Swiss francs from the item "Working Capital Fund" to cover the cost of the investigation in Brazil, apart from the expenses of the expert nominated by the president of the Nansen Office. These expenses will be reimbursed to the League out of the funds that will be available for financing the projected action as a whole."

The *rapporteur* added that, according to his information, the Brazilian Government had notified the Spanish Ambassador at Rio de Janeiro that it would assent to the despatch of the mission, mentioned in the report, to investigate the prospect of settling emigrants.

*Tewfik Beg Al Suwaidi*, representative of Iraq, stated, on behalf of his Government, that he greatly appreciated the work done by the *rapporteur*, the chairman and the members of the Council Committee, between last October and the present date. Referring to the declaration made to the Council by his predecessor, Yassin Pasha Al Hashimi, on the 14th October, 1933, he was glad to say that his Government still remained firmly attached to the spirit of that declaration as to the successful issue of the Assyrian problem.

*Sir John Simon* felt that the report which the representative of Spain had been able to make, including the information on certain quite recent communications and decisions, was more hopeful and constructive than might, a short time previously, have seemed possible. There were those who deplored the fact that it had not been possible to make more rapid progress in this urgent question. But the fact that it had not been possible to do more in the space of three months would, he thought, surprise only those who did not appreciate the difficulties with which the Council Committee had had to contend. It had been faced with a problem which was quite unprecedented in modern times—nothing less than the organised transfer of a large part of a people from one part of the world to another. It had therefore had to explore a wide field of possibilities, for the world was wide, and at the outset none of those possibilities offered any outstanding likelihood of proving practicable. But, in spite of the difficulties, considerable progress appeared to have been made, and he felt that the Council owed a debt of sincere gratitude to the Council Committee and to the representative of Spain for the efforts which they had made.

Although a destination for the Assyrians of Iraq had not yet been definitely fixed, there was at least reason to hope that one was now in sight. That that should be so was due to what he would call the helpful sympathy with which the Brazilian Government had received the representations made to it, on humanitarian grounds, on behalf of the Council Committee. Of course, details remained to be adjusted, but he and his colleagues must all be most grateful to the Brazilian Government for the favourable reply it had now given in principle to the request



that had been addressed to it, and he associated himself entirely with the message of thanks which the *rapporteur* proposed that the Council should send to that Government.

In conclusion, he would repeat his expression of gratification that, as a result of the strenuous efforts which had been made by the Council Committee and its chairman, there was so much hope of a solution of this problem.

The draft resolution was adopted.

Tewfiq Beg Al Suwaidi withdrew.

[E 514/1/93]

Annex.

*Report by the Committee of the Council.*

(Translation.)

THE committee set up by the Council at its meeting on the 14th October, 1933, was requested, in the first place, to consider to what extent a solution of the problem of the Assyrians of Iraq by means of their settlement outside the country was practicable, and, if so, to take, in close collaboration with the Iraqi Government, any steps which it might deem to be appropriate with a view to the preparation and execution of a detailed plan of settlement.

The Council was led to consider such a solution, which doubtless exceeds the scope of the protection of minorities, because it was faced with a wholly exceptional situation, and the necessity for such a solution appears to have been recognised both by the Iraqi Government and the minority concerned. The Iraqi Government stated that it was prepared to make as generous a contribution as its resources permitted to facilitate the settlement of the Assyrians outside its territory, but, as its representative informed the Council, "there was one thing it could not do, and that was to find land." It therefore appealed to the League for assistance in this matter.

It was in these circumstances that the committee of the Council was set up. The latter set to work as soon as the Council's last session had ended. It has been obliged to remain in more or less permanent session, since the task entrusted to it by the Council has turned out to be a particularly arduous and difficult one, mainly on account of the extremely unfavourable economic and social conditions obtaining at the present time in every country in the world.

The committee desired to satisfy itself in the first place that any plan of settlement which it might draw up would apply solely to those persons who expressed a desire to leave Iraq. In order that this emigration might be entirely voluntary, the committee, which was anxious to obtain the desirable guarantees in this matter, accordingly entered into negotiations with the Iraqi Government with a view to the constitution of a local organisation.

The committee's resolution dealing with this question is attached to the present report (Annex 1).<sup>(1)</sup> The local commission appointed by the Iraqi Government has as its chairman Major Thomson, an expert in settlement questions, and its members consist of officials of that Government and the head men of the Assyrian villages. A representative of the Nansen Office will later proceed to Iraq for the purpose of collaborating with the commission in the tasks laid down in the committee's resolution.

In accordance with the Council's decision, the committee's chief task was to assist the Iraqi Government to "find lands on which the Assyrians could be settled." The committee accordingly got into touch with the Governments of States which appeared to offer certain immigration possibilities under the present difficult conditions of world economy. The committee also considered it essential to enlist at the outset of its work the assistance of the Nansen Office for Refugees, which has for many years closely investigated the possibilities which might exist for the settlement of Russian and Armenian refugees. In agreement with the committee, the Nansen Office approached several large colonisation companies, and in particular the Paraná Plantations (Limited), which owns vast tracts of land in the State of Paraná in Northern Brazil. This company submitted a plan of settlement, which was sufficiently comprehensive to include the whole population which might desire to emigrate.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

As this was a scheme for the colonisation of Brazilian territory, the committee asked the Government of that country whether it would be prepared to authorise the entry into, and settlement on, its territory of the Assyrian population. The Brazilian Government informed the chairman of the committee on the 9th January, 1934, that it was prepared to accept the whole of the Assyrians in groups of 500 families a month, as and when the Paraná Plantations (Limited) was able to provide for their settlement. Before going more fully into the conditions of this settlement with the Brazilian Government, the committee considered it essential to satisfy itself that the lands selected would meet the special needs of the Assyrian population by means of a local investigation carried out by someone with a thorough knowledge of the requirements and peculiarities of the population in question. It proposes to entrust this task to Brigadier-General Browne, who is of British nationality and has resided for a very long time in Iraq, where he was in close contact with the Assyrians. Brigadier-General Browne would be assisted by M. Redard, counsellor of the Swiss Legation at Rio de Janeiro, who has been resident in Brazil for some twenty years, and by Mr. Johnson, secretary-general of the Nansen Office. The text of the resolution adopted by the committee in regard to the enquiry in Brazil is attached to the present report (Annex 2).<sup>(1)</sup>

As soon as Brigadier-General Browne has formed his own opinion, and if this is favourable, a representative of the Nansen Office may proceed to Iraq to carry out, in conjunction with the local commission, the mission entrusted to it, and first of all to draw up a list of persons desirous of leaving the country. The committee has not lost sight of the importance of this question, but it did not consider it possible to arrange for this enquiry until it was in a position to propose to the Assyrian population a definite destination and to give it a general idea of the conditions of settlement.

The committee would repeat that it has so far not been possible for it finally to accept the Brazilian colonisation scheme or to discuss all the details of execution which will necessarily arise, but it has received certain favourable information which leads it to hope that it will be possible to carry out this scheme satisfactorily.

Nevertheless, whatever scheme is finally adopted, its execution will necessarily depend on the financial resources available. The committee therefore ventures to draw the Council's attention to the importance and urgency of this question. If it is postponed until the Council's next session it will be impossible to carry out the proposed scheme during the present year.

It will not be possible to calculate the exact expenditure involved until the final destination and the number of persons to be transported are known. As an indication, the committee would mention that, according to the rough provisional calculations made by the Paraná Plantations (Limited) and the Nansen Office, the total cost of settlement in Brazil (cost of transport, purchase of land, initial settlement, food for the first three months, &c.) would amount, for 5,000 persons, to £162,000 (£32 per head), for 10,000 to £314,000 (£31 8s. per head) and for 15,000 to £465,000 (£31 per head).

Ever since it began its work the committee has been considering what possibilities there were of obtaining the necessary funds. It was with that object that it reminded the representative of Iraq of his statement to the Council at its last session that "the Iraqi Government was prepared to make its contribution, as generous a contribution as its resources permitted." The committee is happy to be able to inform the Council that at its meeting on the 18th January the representative of Iraq again confirmed his statements, and assured the committee that the question of Iraq's contribution would be settled with all due speed as soon as the destination was definitely fixed and the number of persons to be dealt with had been ascertained by enquiry in Iraq.

The committee also agrees with a suggestion made by the representative of Iraq that the Assyrian population itself might provide part of the necessary funds. In any scheme of settlement it is customary to arrange for the expenses to be repaid by the settlers in the more or less near future. Since, however, according to the committee's information, the Assyrians are not all destitute, those of them who own some property could undertake to defray part of the expenses from the outset. The committee proposes to go carefully into this

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.



question at its later meetings. It would point out here and now, however, that such participation by the Assyrians themselves cannot be contemplated unless guarantees can be obtained that the Assyrians will be able to dispose of their property in Iraq at reasonable prices. Such an operation will necessarily involve active and generous intervention on the part of the Iraqi Government.

Should the funds supplied by the Iraqi Government and the Assyrians prove inadequate, it would become necessary to seek other sources. As the problem presents certain humanitarian aspects which would probably arouse a more general interest, the Council might appeal to the generosity of Governments and certain private organisations to supply the missing funds.

In this connexion the committee draws the attention of the Council to the fact that the representative of the United Kingdom Government has informed the committee that his Government is willing to pay its share of a League contribution, though it can only contemplate payment as part of a League scheme.

Being of opinion that the question of a possible League contribution exceeds its province, the committee submits that question to the consideration of the Council.

In its resolution of the 14th October, 1933, the Council expressed the hope that the Iraqi Government would be good enough to keep the committee regularly informed of the measures taken to ensure the safety of the Assyrians in Iraq, to assist the families left destitute and to rebuild those villages which had been wholly or partly destroyed.

The committee has the honour to submit to the Council as an annex a report which it has received from the Iraqi Government on this subject (Annex 3).<sup>(1)</sup>

Regarding that report, the committee has had the opportunity of a long conversation with the representative of Iraq, who was assisted by Major Thomson. It has obtained certain additional information and details regarding the position of the Assyrians who are in the Mosul camp, in the villages and outside the Mosul camp. The representative of Iraq assured the committee (a) that his Government would maintain the Mosul camp until the scheme had been completely carried out; (b) that it would give the entire Assyrian population the same treatment and the same care as the rest of the population of the country; (c) that it would pay special attention to safety and hygiene.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

[E 658/10/93]

No. 116.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received January 29.)*

(No. 19.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, January 10, 1934.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 797 of the 20th December, 1933, I have the honour to report that the National Service Law was read for the second time in the Chamber on the 4th January.

2. The occasion was heralded in the local press with a crescendo of ebullient jingoism coupled with perfervid appeals to the nation to arm which seemed completely to ignore the principles of the Kellogg Pact (to which Iraq acceded only two years ago) and to be sublimely oblivious to the efforts at present being made elsewhere to effect some measure of disarmament. In the Chamber there was equal enthusiasm and the importance of the occasion was marked by the presence of the King in the Royal gallery. It is unnecessary for me to comment in detail on the speeches of the Deputies, most of whom were clearly speaking for effect, and with little sense of responsibility. I enclose, however, a summary of the speech made by the *rapporteur* of the Military Committee when presenting the Bill,<sup>(1)</sup> and also of the speech made by Ali Mahmud,<sup>(2)</sup> a well-known Bagdadi lawyer, who made the most forceful speech of the debate.

3. These two speeches were echoed by most of the other speakers and their sentiments sufficiently indicate the general attitude of the Chamber towards the Bill. That many Deputies secretly entertained very different views may well be imagined, but no discordant voice of criticism was lifted to spoil the perfect harmony of approbation.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

4. The important article 38, to which I referred in my previous despatch, was severely criticised in the Military Committee on the ground that it set up an unjustifiable discrimination between different sections of the nation, and this view was heartily supported by a number of Deputies. The Government accordingly proposed the following alternative article, which was referred by the Chamber for consideration:—

*Article 38.*

(a) The Government may, should the public interest so require, apply the proportional quota system in localities where no census of the population has been made in accordance with a special regulation.

(b) Such proportional quota shall be equivalent to the quotas ordered in localities where a census of the population has been made.

(c) The proportional quota system shall be applicable in such localities as may be indicated by Royal irada, and its application shall cease when a census of the population has been carried out in the locality concerned.

5. Nuri Pasha has explained to me that, generally speaking, the census has not yet been taken in those areas (such as the Pizhder districts of the Suleiman liwa and steppes of the Shammar Bedouin in the Northern Jazirah) where the application of the law might prove difficult, and that under the provisions of article 38 as now redrafted, it will be possible in such areas to satisfy the requirements of the law by calling up a small fixed quota through the local chiefs without going through the form of conscripting all men eligible for service. The present plan is to proceed very gradually with the formation of the conscript army, beginning with not more than one regiment of three battalions. In consequence, for a number of years to come the required quota of conscripts for the whole country will be very small. Nuri Pasha feels confident that this device will enable the Government to avoid the dangers of trying to enforce a general conscription of the tribes and at the same time is proof against the criticism which the original draft of this article has incurred. He has further explained to me that it is not at present proposed to put the law into force until 1936 or 1937, and this explanation is borne out by the draft of article 40 (incomplete in the copy sent to you with my previous despatch) which the Government have now put before the Chamber. It provides that the law shall only come into force from such date as shall be fixed by Royal irada.

6. My talks with Nuri have satisfied me that the present Government realise the necessity for acting with caution in carrying out their plans for introducing national service. On the other hand, there is a risk that if a Government with extreme nationalist leanings were to come into power, the law might be prematurely brought into force in the tribal areas and invite serious opposition. In any case, there is a possibility that as soon as it is known that the law has been placed on the statute book, an agitation may be started, especially in the Middle Euphrates area and in Kurdistan, which would seriously embarrass the Government. I propose, with your approval, to continue to warn the King and his Ministers unobtrusively of the dangers of precipitate action.

7. Several other small amendments were introduced during the second reading, but these are not of sufficient importance to call for separate comment at this stage.

8. The third and final reading of the Bill has been put on the agenda of the Chamber for the 10th January, and I will report to you in due course any further action of interest which may be taken concerning it.

9. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.



[E 667/16/93]

No. 117.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received January 29.)*

(No. 28. Confidential.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, January 12, 1934.*

IT appears probable that the protracted period of indecision of the Iraqi Government regarding their future policy in the matter of a development programme to be financed out of the oil royalties is now coming to an end. In the course of a discussion, which I had with the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 9th January, he informed me that, after a prolonged sitting, the Council of Ministers had unanimously reached a decision to the effect that a programme of capital works extending over a period of four years should be put in hand at the earliest possible moment.

2. In order to finance this programme Nuri Pasha's personal impression was that it would be necessary for the Government to take up a foreign loan of £2,500,000 sterling, and to invite Parliament to authorise the Minister of Finance to contract a loan of this amount.

3. He stated that the works contained in the programme and their approximate cost were as follows:—

	£
(a) Habbaniyah ... ..	1,100,000
(b) Kut Barrage ... ..	1,000,000
(c) Two steel bridges over the Tigris ... ..	350,000
(d) New barracks for existing army ... ..	400,000
(e) Military equipment ... ..	500,000
(f) Health department, hospitals and dispensaries ... ..	300,000
(g) Schools ... ..	150,000
(h) Law courts ... ..	50,000
(j) Roads, bridges, minor irrigation schemes, police stations, &c. ... ..	900,000
(k) Payment to His Majesty Government for buildings at Hinaidi and Mosul in October 1937 ... ..	350,000
Total ... ..	5,100,000

It was intended that the work should begin at the commencement of the coming financial year and that the programme should be completed by the 31st March, 1938. I would particularly invite your attention to the final item. The Ministry of Defence have shown much interest in the Hinaidi and Mosul cantonments lately, and this is a welcome indication of their intention to honour their bond in the matter of payment, though their readiness to do so will make an extension of the time-limit for the removal of the Royal Air Force from Hinaidi all the more difficult to secure.

4. In order to find funds to meet the cost of the programme, Nuri Pasha stated that the Iraqi Government proposed to allocate the oil revenues receivable during the four years, and also to take advances against the loan from Messrs. Barings, or whoever undertakes the provision of the loan funds. It was estimated that on the 1st April, 1934, the amount available for allocation to the capital works programme, *i.e.*, the net budgetary surplus available at the close of the current financial year, taking into account all receipts and expenditure on capital account, would be approximately £275,000, and this amount would be regarded as available for the cost of the programme. During each of the next three years, the Iraqi Government expected to receive £540,000 as royalty payments from the Iraq Petroleum Company, and during the fourth year, *i.e.*, 1937-38, they hoped to receive £720,000. These amounts would be allocated for capital works expenditure, thus providing in all from Iraqi Government resources, including the cash in hand, a sum of £2,615,000. During the year 1934, the Iraqi Government proposed to ask Messrs. Barings, or whoever handles the business, for an advance payment of £350,000, and in 1935, for a further advance payment of £500,000. In 1936, they would take a formal loan of £1 million, out of which the advances of the two previous years, plus interest, would be repaid, and in 1937-38 they would take a further formal loan of £1,500,000,

bringing the total of the loan up to £2,500,000, which, added to the amount available from their own resources, *i.e.*, £2,615,000, would cover the estimated total cost of £5,100,000 with £15,000 to spare.

5. It will be appreciated that the scheme, as outlined above by Nuri Pasha, is at present in the embryo stage and has been crudely expressed. It will now be examined in detail in the Ministry of Finance, more especially in relation to items (d) to (k) in paragraph 3, the inclusion of which in a loan programme has not yet been officially put forward to the Ministry.

6. Nuri Pasha was not sure how the proposals would be received by the King, but from my talks with the latter I have received the impression that His Majesty is anxious to go ahead with the scheme of capital development which formed part of his father's policy, and that he is not averse from a foreign loan in order to set it on foot at once. The temper of the Parliament is more uncertain, and I gather from Nuri Pasha that the Government are by no means confident that the scheme, even if approved by the King, will secure their acceptance. If it does not, and Parliament reject the proposals, it is likely that the present Cabinet will ask the King to dissolve Parliament and call for another general election.

7. The above information was given to me confidentially, and I have the honour to request that it may be regarded as such and not communicated at present.

8. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &amp;c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

[E 845/845/93]

No. 118.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received February 6.)*

(No. 50.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, January 25, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to report that I recently had occasion to invite the attention of the Minister for Foreign Affairs to certain articles in the vernacular press from which it was clear that Anglo-Iraqi relations were again being used as a stalking-horse between the rival political factions in Bagdad.

2. The articles in question appeared in the newspapers directed respectively by Nuri Pasha and Yasin Pasha and took the form of comparing the records of the present Government and that of its predecessor (of which Yasin was a member), with especial reference to the degree to which each had given, or was giving, way to pressure from this Embassy on such questions as the future of the Iraq Railways, the port of Basra, the formation of the Air Defence Force and the execution of the legal guarantees given by Iraq to the League of Nations. For the purposes of this controversy the relative merits of the two pashas were, by inference, to be measured by the extent to which they are alleged to have resisted British policy.

3. I was not unaware that the present polemics were only being indulged in to cover the confusion of both parties over the retreats which each had been obliged to beat in the matter of the posting of the British judges to Baquba and Hillah. I thought it prudent, however, to warn Nuri Pasha that the game of baiting adversaries in this particular manner had gone far enough, and that a point had now been reached at which the gullible Bagdadi public might easily be led astray by the pernicious rubbish that was daily being poured out by certain organs.

4. His Excellency admitted the force of my remarks, but argued that it was difficult, in the absence of censorship, for him to prevent irresponsible editors from indulging in their taste for invective, and that as the articles to which I alluded were rehashes of articles contributed by ignorant people to the Syrian press, editors could excuse themselves on the ground that they were not personally responsible for the language of the contributors.

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5. I left his Excellency in no doubt that I did not accept his excuses and reminded him that the publication of such articles could only result in the further embitterment of his own relations with Yasin Pasha, which I wished to assuage. Nuri Pasha promised that he would take the matter up with his colleagues as he realised the dangers of irresponsible press comment, and I am hopeful that my representations will prove effective.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

[E 946/1/93]

No. 119.

*Air Ministry to Foreign Office.—(Received February 10.)*

THE Secretary, Air Ministry, presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State, Foreign Office, and with reference to Air Ministry communication, dated the 4th August, 1933, begs to transmit, for the information of Secretary Sir John Simon, two copies of a further report by the Air Officer Commanding, Iraq, on events in connexion with the Assyrian situation, covering the period 29th June, 1933-31st August, 1933.

*Air Ministry, February 8, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 119.

*Report on Events in connexion with the Assyrian Situation between June 29 and August 31, 1933.*

Map reference: Iraq 1-inch = 2 miles.

#### *General Political Situation.*

THE general political situation in Iraq had not altered much since my report ending the 28th June, 1933. There were possibilities of trouble breaking out because of the following:—

- (a) The unsatisfactory situation in the Barzan area had never been settled, and unusual numbers of troops were needed there to maintain the *status quo*.
- (b) The Shiah agitation on the Lower Euphrates was simmering, and any reverse suffered by troops in the north was likely to have repercussions in this area.
- (c) The King and Nuri Pasha, who were likely to be less anti-British and a general restraining influence on the Government, were in Europe.
- (d) The action of the Assyrian leader, Yacou, just as the Kurdish leaders in the Barzan area had returned from Turkey and were attempting to negotiate terms with the Government, naturally caused great uneasiness to the Iraqi Government.

2. For the above reasons, therefore, the Iraqi Government was nervous, and it was evident that had the regular Iraqi forces suffered even a minor defeat in the field or become so involved in the mountainous country that they could not easily be extricated, a serious situation might arise, and there is no doubt that it was owing to the complication introduced into the military situation by Yacou's action, that the Kurdish rebels were allowed to return to their villages and retain their arms. It is also understood that a Government grant of some £3,000 was paid to them ostensibly for relief purposes, but in reality as a bribe to keep the peace.

#### *Summary of Assyrian Political Situation prior to June 29, 1933.*

3. The events between the 26th May and 28th June, 1933, which may be regarded as the introduction to the third phase of the Assyrian Nationalist movement, were described in my report dated the 29th June, 1933.

4. The events subsequent to the 28th June may be regarded as the third phase of the Assyrian Nationalist movement. At the opening of this phase the situation was briefly as follows:—

5. The Assyrian leader mentioned in paragraph 1 (e), Yacou, son of Malik Ismail, had attracted the attention of the local Government authorities by his attitude in connexion with the Mar Shimun's settlement policy, and by appearing at various times in the Dohuk Qadha accompanied by an armed following. After a certain amount of negotiation he was persuaded to come in to Liwa Headquarters, Mosul, on the 26th June, 1933.

6. The Mar Shimun had incurred the grave displeasure of the Government through his policy of non-co-operation and had been detained in Bagdad. Although King Feisal had instructed the Government by cable to permit Mar Shimun to return to Mosul, the tone of a letter he had written to the Minister for the Interior was couched in such inconciliatory and recalcitrant terms that the Government considered that his presence in the north might aggravate the situation created by Yacou. On the 29th June, therefore, he was still in Bagdad at the express wish of the Iraqi Government.

7. Assyrians in general outside the levies were divided in allegiance; some were in favour of following the lead of Malik Khoshaba and accepting the Government's settlement scheme, whilst others, chiefly the Upper Tiari and Takuma tribes, were prepared blindly to follow the lead of the Mar Shimun.

#### *Split in Assyrian Community as a result of the Notification of the Iraqi Government's Terms for Settlement.*

8. On the 10th July, 1933, a general meeting of Assyrian leaders was held at Mosul with the object of explaining the Iraqi Government's obligations and intentions regarding the Assyrian settlement. The meeting was addressed by the Government representative, the Administrative Inspector and Major D. B. Thomson, who had arrived in Iraq to help the Iraqi Government to carry out the settlement scheme as advised by the League. Opinions were sharply divided and definite pro and opposition parties under Malik Khoshaba and Yacou Ismail respectively emerged as a result. It was stated at the meeting by the commandant of police that those Assyrians who wished to leave the country might do so, while those who remained must obey the laws of the land.

9. Yacou, and another leader, Loco, had several talks with Colonel Stafford, the Administrative Inspector, Mosul, and Major Thomson, and the Assyrian leaders reluctantly agreed that they would proceed to Bagdad and see the Mar Shimun to obtain his views regarding the settlement scheme. They, however, did not proceed to Bagdad owing, it is thought, to fear of arrest.

10. Yacou Ismail proceeded to Syria secretly on the 16th July to investigate the possibility of Assyrian emigration. It is understood that he left instructions that, if nothing was heard of him in three days, an organisation, which must have been previously concerted, was to be put into operation. Nothing having been heard, a band of between 1,200 and 1,300 men, the majority of whom were armed, assembled and about 900 crossed the Tigris into Syria in bodies between the 19th and the 21st July, the remainder returning to their villages. After crossing the Tigris the Assyrians camped in the Wadi Sufan (137K. S.W. 29C. 4.1), where they were told by the local French authorities that they must remain until negotiations between the French and Iraqi Governments had been completed. The negotiations went on until the 27th July, when the French decided that they would not accept any Assyrian immigration from Iraq. They assured the Iraqi Government that they would enforce this decision. By the 30th they were reported to have disarmed a number of the Assyrians and to have removed them from the immediate neighbourhood of the Iraq frontier. The position was complicated by the fact that the demarcation of the Syria-Iraq boundary had not been completed and the French authorities were chary of attempting to disarm Assyrians who were still in Iraq territory. The local French authorities were, in fact, ordered by the French High Commission to return arms to a number of Assyrians who were in the doubtful territory and to inform them that, if they were still there after the 4th August, they would be in French territory and disarmed. Arms were returned to a number of Assyrians on the 4th August, and though little definite information is known as to what passed between the French and Yacou's band, it is assumed that, as the French were unwilling



to allow them to remain in Syria, their only course was to return to their villages, which had been left practically denuded of men between the ages of 16 and 60, and were therefore liable to attacks by Kurdish and Arab raiders.

11. There seems at this time to have been no intention on the part of the general body of Assyrians who had left Iraq for Syria to resist the Iraqi Government's settlement terms by force of arms, and it is very doubtful if they knew upon what terms, if any, they would be permitted to return to Iraq, as apparently no definite instructions were sent to them by any Iraqi official. It is, however, practically certain that their immediate leaders, Yacou and Loco, although disheartened by their failure to secure an asylum in Syria, were determined not to hand over their rifles to the Government.

#### *Policy of Iraqi Government vis-à-vis Yacou Ismail's Party.*

12. The Iraqi Government was incensed at the refusal of their original land settlement terms and the crystallisation of a definite non-co-operation party, and commenced drafting troops into the Dohuk area. When the fact that so large a number of armed men had crossed into Syria and were likely to be forced to return by the French was established, they were apprehensive of the result of an engagement and decided that no Assyrian would be allowed to return to Iraq without surrendering his arms and ammunition. The recruitment of 1,000 irregular police, mainly Kurds, but some Assyrians, in the Amadia area was ordered. The Iraqi Government proclaimed at the same time that the Assyrians who remained quiet in Iraq would not be disturbed. It is known, however, that certain Kurdish Aghas and Arab tribes, especially the Shammar, had been approached with a view to co-operating, should it be necessary.

13. The organisation and position of the Iraqi army forces detailed to carry out the Government's policy mentioned above was as given in Appendix "A."

14. By the end of July the dispositions of the Iraqi army were as given in Appendix "B," the whole being under the command of Bekr Sidki, who had already pronounced anti-Assyrian views and had attracted my unfavourable attention in May, when, as a result of my representations, the King promised that he would be removed from the Northern Command. He appears further to have estranged the feelings of the French authorities on the frontier when negotiations regarding the passage into Syria of the Assyrians were being carried out. The meeting, which he attended on the 27th July, lasted only fifteen minutes.

15. It seems clear at this time that the Iraqi Government had decided upon no policy for dealing with the new Assyrian problem as a whole, and had no clear idea in their minds as to how they would use what forces they had available. It is probable that, if they had been careful to prevent their regular forces meeting returning Assyrians, no incident would have arisen. It is likely that the majority of the Assyrians who had left their villages with hopes of finding a home in Syria would have come back disillusioned as to any better solution being available, and might have been prepared to negotiate on the basis of the settlement terms already proposed.

16. The absence of a declared policy, the personality of Bekr Sidki and the temper of his troops, in whom a violent anti-Assyrian feeling had been fostered and who were nervous of any engagement with armed Assyrians, made it almost certain that, if armed Assyrians and regular troops met, a clash would occur and be followed by tragic consequences.

#### *Action taken by the Royal Air Force, and the Levy Situation.*

17. During the period up to the 4th August, I was faced with the following difficulties in deciding upon the line of policy to be taken by me:—

- (a) Possible repercussions amongst the Assyrians in the levies, one company of which was at the summer training camp, Ser Amadia, another in Mosul and three others at Hinaidi. The majority were pro-Mar Shimun in sentiment and naturally deeply interested in the future settlement of their nation. Moreover, Yacou Ismail was an ex-levy officer, and a large number of those who had crossed into Syria had served at various times in the Iraqi levies, and had many friends and relations still serving.

- (b) Complete lack of accurate information from the north from my own sources, from Iraqi Government sources, or from the military mission.
- (c) A policy of suspicion, obstruction and non-co-operation which had from the beginning been adopted by the Iraqi Government.

#### *Behaviour of the Assyrian Levies.*

18. The behaviour of the Assyrian levies in the face of great provocation and alarm for the person of the Mar Shimun and their families, has been extremely good. No incidents have occurred, and I think this is due to two main causes, (a) regard to the oath which they took last year, (b) I had taken great care to explain each change in the situation to them, and to point out how hopeless any attempt on their part would be to throw in their lot with Yacou Ismail's party. The situation at Mosul of the Assyrian company, at one time guarding the very aircraft which was actually engaged in attacking their compatriots, was most unenviable, and their steadiness has contributed greatly to the fact that no actual conflagration has broken out in Mosul town itself.

#### *Lack of Accurate Intelligence from the North.*

19. There has been from the beginning of this phase of the Assyrian situation almost a complete absence of accurate and early information from the troubled area. This can be put down to several causes:—

- (a) *Amazingly Secret Preparation by the Assyrians under Yacou for their Emigration.*—No one, not even the local police, knew of their intention to depart, or even of the fact that they had departed, until some days after they had started.
- (b) *Definite Policy of the Iraqi Government not to Pass on any Information which they had, either to me or to the other British Officials.*—They were most suspicious of British interference from the beginning and even members of the military mission were not consulted and were kept, to a great extent, in the dark, owing to the attitude of the Ministry of Defence. It was only after a strong protest on my part through the Embassy, in which I stated that if I was not provided with information I should be unable to carry out the terms of the treaty, should a situation requiring it arise, that I was enabled to get some information through the British military mission.
- (c) *Iraqi Government Campaign to Prevent our Intelligence from Obtaining and Passing on any Information.*—It has been established that at least one of our agents has been murdered and nothing has been heard of several others since the trouble started. Less information has been available from this area than ever before, and what little has come through has not been confirmed until some time afterwards.

#### *Air Reconnaissances by No. 30 (Bomber) Squadron.*

20. In order to clear up this most unsatisfactory state of affairs, I ordered daily air reconnaissances to be carried out over the Zakho-Feish Khabur area from the 24th July. Even this caused a protest from the military authorities, and they requested me to cease the reconnaissances, giving as an excuse that air collisions might occur, since their aircraft were also operating in the area. At the same time they spread reports that my aircraft were dropping messages and even food on the Assyrians camped in the Wadi Sufan. In order to allay these suspicions as far as possible, I ordered my aircraft not to descend below 2,000 feet over the Feish Khabur area, and, finally, on the 5th August, I stopped flying for some days over the military area, since I was afraid they would be looked upon as taking part in the operations in which Iraqi aircraft were bombing, and this, apart from the chance of their being fired upon, would certainly affect the situation *vis-à-vis* the levies.

#### *Movement of No. 3 Section, No. 1 Armoured Car Company, to Mosul.*

21. On the 24th July I despatched a section of armoured cars to Mosul. This also was the subject of a protest from the Iraqi Government.



*Closing Down of the Summer Training Camp, Ser Amadia.*

22. At this time also I considered closing the summer training camp at Ser Amadia, but I felt that its presence had a definite steadying effect throughout the north and a withdrawal at this juncture was unjustified. However, I ordered the nursing sisters and the wives of two officers to return to Bagdad.

*Action by Yacou's Band during and after August 4.*

23. There are a number of conflicting reports regarding the action by Yacou's band during and after the 4th August. At the time all reports indicated that anything up to 1,300 Assyrians had crossed the river at Feish Khabur and an engagement had started between them and a company of the Iraq army, who had been sent to meet them to expect surrender of their arms, and that later a general engagement between 700 or 800 Assyrians and the Iraq army forces, whose headquarters were at Dairabun took place.

*Official Reports by the Military Mission.*

24. General Headlam's report, compiled presumably from the official reports to the Ministry of Defence, stated that an action took place at Dairabun, that a large number of Assyrians attacked the camp in a determined and ferocious manner, that the Iraqi army fought well, and their *moral* was high and that the Government could be thankful to Bekr Sidi and his troops for what they achieved during the operations. The report throughout showed an anti-Assyrian bias and showed the behaviour of Bekr Sidki in a very favourable light.

25. Owing to the absence of reliable eye-witnesses and the fact that no British officials were at Dairabun during the fighting, nor were they allowed to travel in the area for some time afterwards, it is only possible to build up a general picture of what occurred. Reports I have received appear to confirm the statement of Captain Larrieste, the French S.S.O., who was with Yacou on the right bank, that on the 4th August some 150 Assyrians in Syria, with the intention of surrendering their arms, decided to return to their homes in Iraq, and that after the return of their rifles by the French they began to cross the river near Feish Khabur. They crossed in no military formation, but shortly after the crossing commenced, firing broke out between those crossing and part of a company of regular Iraqi infantry which was based on Feish Khabur, and whose headquarters were at the military camp at Dairabun. It will probably never be known which side actually commenced firing, as in the general state of nervousness and suspicion upon both sides an extremely small incident would have precipitated a fight. On hearing the rifle fire, Yacou, who had remained on the right bank of the Tigris, gathered the remaining Assyrians, about 500 in number, and proceeded at once to the aid of his compatriots. Fighting then became general, and during the night of 4th-5th fighting was continued throughout, and both machine guns and artillery fire were heard.

26. The fighting continued throughout the morning of the 5th August, when parties of the Assyrians commenced recrossing into Syria, and the army subsequently on the 7th and the 8th moved towards Zakho, and are reputed to have lost some men from fatigue and thirst.

27. There is no definite information about the details of the fighting apart from the official report from General H. R. Headlam, but taking into consideration the size of the regular Iraqi force, combined with the number of Assyrians armed with rifles only, and that the army possessed armoured cars, machine guns and mountain artillery and occupied a defended camp, it does not seem surprising that they beat off the attack on their camp. The official claim that it had achieved a notable military victory must, I consider, be taken with reserve, as later reports indicate that considerable demoralisation had shown itself.

28. There seems little doubt but that had the Assyrians really intended to fight an action with the Iraq army when they crossed the river, and had they had any thought-out plan, they might well have inflicted large losses upon the Iraqi forces during the night the 4th-5th.

29. I consider the salient features of the action are these:—

- (i) The Assyrians crossing had no thought-out plan for attacking the Iraq army and that fighting broke out and was continued in an unorganised manner, except perhaps against isolated pickets.

- (ii) Individually, the Iraqi rank and file seem to have fought with courage, and I consider that under efficient leadership, they may be considered as good fighters as most native troops. I consider their weakness is their officers and the fact that losses from exhaustion and thirst on the 7th and 8th are reported tends to show that the administration of the force was not good.

*Casualties as a result of Dairabun Fighting.*

30. It is probable that there were not more than forty casualties (if as many) among the Assyrians who attacked Dairabun.

31. The Iraq army has admitted about seventy casualties in this fighting, but from information available in the district it seems that they probably suffered more, some of which were due to exposure and fatigue.

*Action of the Assyrians on and after August 5.*

32. About 550 of the Assyrians who attacked the Dairabun camp on the night 4th-5th August, or crossed the Tigris that night, returned with Yacou to Syria during the following two or three days; the remaining 200 broke through to the hills and endeavoured to make their way back in small parties to their villages.

There is no evidence that any cohesion ever existed amongst these Assyrians, some of whom were unarmed, and this may have been due to the absence of their leaders, and to the fact that the majority of them had no intention of armed resistance to the Iraqi Government, and only wished to get back to their villages as quickly as possible.

*Action by the Iraqi Authorities after August 5.*

33. The Kaimakam of Zakho, on the 5th August, put into operation previously concerted plans for Kurdish tribal participation, and numbers of Assyrian prisoners, who were either captured or had surrendered voluntarily, were sent into Zakho between the 5th and 8th by the Kurds who had operated independently, or were accompanied by small parties of police.

34. After the 5th August, no casualties are reported either in the army or police, and the fact that few prisoners are believed to have survived points either to a complete loss of control by the army commanders or to an absence of humanity, which is to be deplored. All the evidence indicates that the army must be held directly responsible for what occurred.

35. No discrimination appears to have been attempted between returning Assyrians of Yacou's band, who have been referred to and treated as rebels, other Assyrians of the pro-Mar Shimun faction who had not accompanied him to Syria or those who were actually of the pro-settlement party and had signified their willingness to co-operate with the Government.

36. It is known that some Assyrians, including priests from Dohuk, Korigawana and other villages, who had not been directly implicated, were arrested by the police and handed over to the army. They have not been heard of since.

*Moral of the Iraq Army as a result of the fighting at Dairabun.*

37. The *moral* of the Iraq army on the 5th and subsequent days was probably low, and it is possible that the policy of collecting Assyrians in the district and of handing them over to the army, who in some cases shot them in cold blood, was probably inspired by the necessity for re-establishing their *moral*.

38. It is also possible that the reason Bekr Sidki and the Iraqi authorities generally were so adverse to any British official or officer being allowed to be with the army or to travel in the disturbed area, was due to these steps having been taken and a wish to conceal them.

39. There seems no doubt that the Government reports of its army's victories in the north, and the official welcomes to the troops, both at Mosul and Bagdad, were all part of a carefully constructed scheme to conceal the unsatisfactory outcome of the purely military operations, and to make the most of the anti-Assyrian and anti-Christian spirit amongst the Arabs generally, which manifested itself in somewhat hysterical outbursts of national sentiment.



*Iraqi Government's Reaction to Effect of Dairabun Fighting on the Army.*

40. The behaviour of the army during these operations could not have increased the confidence of the Iraqi Government, and the high-handed assumption by their commanders of certain duties more properly the responsibility of the civil administration, has, I understand, deeply incensed certain members of the Cabinet.

*Simel Massacre.*

41. The culmination of the indiscriminate action against Assyrian men, regardless of party or guilt, who fell into the hand of the army, may be said to be the massacre at Simel. Between the 8th and 10th August, widespread looting, raiding and burning of Assyrian villages in the Simel, Dohuk and Al Qosh areas had been in progress. Both Kurds and Arabs of the Shammar and Jabur tribes were implicated. Numbers of refugees had fled to the three centres Simel, Al Qosh and Dohuk. The majority had simply fled from the raiders, and had not been implicated in the preceding events in any way. On the 9th and 10th August they had handed in their rifles to the police and asked for protection. On the 11th, a section of the Iraq Army Motor Machine-Gun Company and a detachment of other regular troops arrived, and almost immediately opened fire on the defenceless men, who were concentrated more or less apart from the women and children.

42. The fact that few women and children were killed, while the lowest report puts it at 315 men, shows that there must have been definite orders for a search for men and for their extermination.

*Cessation of Operations.*

43. It may be said that all actual operations by the army against the Assyrians ceased on the 12th August, when a proclamation was made to the effect that a respite of sixty hours would be given to the Assyrian rebels for them to surrender their arms, and that if they did they could consider their lives safe and return to their villages.

*Arrival of King Feisal and the Policy of the Iraqi Government after August 4-5.*

44. King Feisal and Nuri Pasha, the Foreign Minister, arrived in Bagdad on the 2nd August, and immediately they got into touch with the situation, considered that any conciliatory policy towards the Mar Shimun was no longer possible.

45. Nuri was sent to Beirut to negotiate with the French, and on his return, and on definite reports of the fighting of the 4th and 5th August and the events which led up to it, the King and the Government were most incensed and alarmed at the action of the French. They considered them to have acted in a definitely unfriendly manner, because they wished to embarrass the King and the Iraqi Government owing to their failure to settle Syria, and because of the King's known desire to profit by their errors. The King thought that the returning of the rifles to the Assyrians was a calculated act and directly contrary to the frontier agreement, then in force.

46. This anger and worry, coupled with but little information from the north, appear to have clouded the judgment of the entire Iraqi Government, and they seem no longer to have been able to distinguish between Yacon's band, some of whom may now have become actual rebels, and the majority of the Assyrians who were not. They ordered Kurdish auxiliaries to be enlisted and talked of raising the tribes. At the same time they drafted an exceedingly intemperate note to France.

47. By the 8th August the situation became clearer, and the fact that there was no longer an organised Assyrian band in existence became known. A proclamation was mooted, naming certain ringleaders as having to stand their trial, but granting amnesty to all the others if they returned to their villages. Nothing, however, was done until the 11th August, when the Minister of the Interior went to Mosul and a proclamation was made by the acting mutessarif, Mosul, to the effect that Assyrian villages, which had not been implicated, could be confident of protection. On the 12th a further proclamation to the rebel Assyrians was made as noted in paragraph 43, but by this time it was far too late; raiding of Assyrian villages had broken out, the Simel massacre had taken place, and no Assyrian could have been confident of the honesty of a Government proclamation.

48. Although the civil authorities in the Mosul area were incensed at the high-handed action of Bekr Sidki in dealing with what were considered to be civil responsibilities in this area, it does not seem clear that any serious effort was made by the Iraqi Government between the 5th and 11th August to restrain the actions of the army, and it is possible that they did not know at that time the steps that Bekr Sidki was taking. Later, however, the Government apparently combined with the military to hide the facts from all British officials.

*Action by the R.A.F. and the Levy Situation subsequent to August 4-5, 1933.*

49. The position as a result of the indecisive fighting of the 4th-5th August, appeared to be as follows:—

- (a) Eight hundred armed Assyrians in open revolt against the Government had broken into the hills around Zakho, and were making for the Dohuk area. There were, in fact, only about 200, who had no intention of fighting.
- (b) It was thought that Assyrians, not yet implicated, might join forces with their compatriots if they could claim any sort of military success.
- (c) It was also possible that Kurds in the Barzan area would repudiate Government authority in similar circumstances, and that the Shi'a element in the Lower Euphrates would try to profit by Government's difficulties.
- (d) The Iraqi Government was alarmed that the levies would rise against the Government, especially at Mosul.
- (e) The Iraqi Government was very incensed with the French in Syria, whom they considered were responsible for what had occurred, and had behaved in a treacherous and unfriendly manner, particularly in view of the 1927 Treaty of "Bon-Voisinage" in force.
- (f) It was possible that if the Government's forces, together with irregular elements of Kurds and Arabs, were victorious, they might inflict terrible punishment upon the whole Assyrian community, unless the forces were confined strictly to a laid down area and policy by the Government.

50. In view of these factors, I advised the King as follows at an interview which I had with him and the acting Ambassador on the 6th August:—

- (a) Not to get his regular forces involved in hill fighting, where they could be at a tactical disadvantage and any reverse might have widespread and disastrous results.
- (b) To appoint an Iraqi official and British officer to go to Syria to clear up the position regarding the remaining Assyrians, about which very little was known.
- (c) To do anything possible to prevent irregular Kurds and Arabs becoming involved, which would lead to repercussions which might involve Iraq beyond her strength.

51. On the following day, as a result of further information which seemed to show that the returning Assyrians had not intended real resistance to the Government and had no longer any cohesion as a fighting body, I pressed the King at a further meeting as follows:—

- (a) To formulate a policy for dealing with the whole situation.
- (b) To restrict the operations, including those of the Iraqi Air Force, to a declared military zone.
- (c) To take steps to inform both the Army Command and the Assyrians in arms what the Government policy was, and upon what terms the emigrants would be allowed to return to Iraq.
- (d) To remove Bekr Sidki from command in the area, as I considered that with him in command there was little prospect of any conciliatory attitude being adopted towards the Assyrians, who, after all, would probably have to be settled eventually in Iraq.



- (e) To confine very strictly the activities of the Kurdish irregulars who had been raised and who were likely to treat all Assyrians as fair game, and to note that it was of great importance to protect those Assyrians who had not been implicated, and who had signified their intention of co-operating with the Government in the settlement scheme. It was also important that the villages which had been denuded of males on account of the exodus should have protection against raids.

52. At the same time I obtained a declaration from the Ministry of Defence, as a preliminary to issuing any further bombs to the Royal Iraqi Air Force, that they would not be used indiscriminately outside the military zone, and that they would only be used against Assyrians actually attacking or being attacked by the Iraqi regular forces, or retiring before them. I also stressed that to avoid further bloodshed, and because it was doubtful if the Government had made any conditions clear to the Assyrians in arms, bombing should be discontinued until the effect of dropping messages giving the terms of surrender had been tried.

*Closing of the Summer Training Camp at Ser Amadia.*

53. On the 7th August I decided to close the Summer Training Camp at Ser Amadia owing to—

- (a) The state of uncertainty and unrest in the area generally, which might lead to political difficulties with the Iraqi authorities.
- (b) The rumours and reports of the murder of Assyrian prisoners without trial by the Iraq army and the effect of this upon the levies, particularly the Assyrian company located at the summer training camp.

54. The personnel were evacuated in accordance with the normal programme by motor transport to Simel and by Victoria from there to Hinaidi. The stores and equipment were evacuated by motor transport. The camp was completely evacuated without incident by the 16th August.

*Reconnaissance by No. 30 (B) Squadron after August 10 as a result of Reports of Raiding, Looting and Burning of Assyrian Villages.*

55. On the 10th August reports began to come in of widespread raiding by the Kurds, and Arabs of the Shammar and Jubair tribes, in the districts round Simel, Dohuk and Al Qosh. I ordered No. 30 (B) Squadron to take photographs of all villages found burning, or burnt, or which appeared to have been, or were in the process of being looted.

56. I also increased the reconnaissance flights further afield to the Amadia, Diana and Agra areas to reassure Assyrian communities living there who had not been implicated, to discourage the Kurdish elements, including those from Turkey, from raiding, and to report if there were any signs of raiding or bodies of raiders on the move.

57. Detailed reports and copies of photographs obtained were forwarded to Air Ministry on the 24th August, 1933, and, though spasmodic looting probably continued throughout August, the action of the Government in stationing police in many villages and actually driving the Shammar back across the Tigris stopped the worst of it by the 15th August, by which time at least forty of the Assyrian villages had been raided, twenty-seven of which were completely or partially destroyed.

58. The reconnaissances were continued throughout the month, as I considered they would have a definite stabilising influence throughout the north.

*Appointment of British and Iraqi Officers to Interview the French regarding the Assyrian Situation.*

59. As a result of the advice I had given to the King as set out in paragraph 50 (b), I was asked on the 8th August to detail an officer to accompany an Iraqi officer on a mission of enquiry to Syria. I accordingly ordered Squadron-Leader P. T. J. Chamberlayne, A.F.C., who is a French interpreter, to proceed by air with the Iraqi representative to Deir-es-Sor, where arrangements had been made by the French to receive the delegates. The French were not

prepared to go out of their way to assist the Iraqi Government, but were perfectly willing to provide the British with information. As the delegates were not allowed to proceed to the Assyrian internment camp, and therefore none of the statements made by the French could be tested, and all fear of a serious rebellion by the Assyrians was then over, the visit was not actually of immediate value.

*Banishment of Mar Shimun and immediate Relatives from Iraq.*

60. Feeling in the Iraqi Government and the army against the Mar Shimun and his immediate relatives, including his father, brother and the Lady Surma, was extremely high after the events of the 4th-5th August, and by the 14th August the Government seriously considered arraigning the Mar Shimun himself, on a capital charge. His position in Bagdad was also not secure, and fear for his life was unsettling the Assyrians in the levies at Hinaidi and Mosul. The Iraqi Government finally decided that the best solution was to deprive him and his family of Iraqi nationality and to deport him from Iraq.

61. The British Government offered an asylum in Cyprus, and I arranged for the air transport for the proscribed persons to Palestine en route for Cyprus by "Victoria." This was concurred in by the acting Ambassador. The Mar Shimun, his father and brother, accompanied by two levy officers who could report that he was safe and comfortably settled, were flown to Ramleh on the 18th August in an aircraft of No. 70 (B.T.) Squadron, and subsequently from Tiberias, by a "Rangoon" of No. 203 (F.B.) Squadron on the 21st. On the 29th a further party, including Lady Surma and thirteen other women and children were conveyed to Haifa by "Victoria" and on to Cyprus by boat under arrangements made by the Palestine Government.

*Relief Measures.*

62. It became apparent by the 11th August, both to me and the Government, who had eye-witness reports from the Minister for the Interior, that it was essential for prompt relief measures to be instituted in the devastated areas if death by disease and want was not to stalk unchecked amongst the homeless and unprotected families. I considered it of the greatest importance to reassure the levies, who had behaved with notable restraint, as to the welfare of their families, many of whom lived in these areas. There were many rumours regarding atrocities to women and children, and that burning and looting had been in progress was well known. I accordingly pressed the Iraqi Government for permission to send a British officer into the area to carry out an investigation as to the position of levy families.

63. Subsequently, reports of the situation made it clear that investigation alone would be of no value and that the levy families in the area would have to be evacuated, and that Hinaidi would provide the only secure refuge.

64. In spite of assurances both from the King and Nuri, including a written authority for a relief commission to proceed, which I obtained on the 17th August, it was not until the 16th September that the Iraqi authorities agreed to the commission proceeding outside Mosul. The commission, consisting of two R.A.F. officers from Air Headquarters, one British levy officer and two Assyrian levy officers, complete with W/T and transport, proceeded to Mosul on the 20th August. A report on its activities has been forwarded separately, reference my S. 11126/7, dated the 8th November, 1933.

*Anti-British and Anti-Christian Propaganda.*

65. From March 1933 onwards articles of a nature derogatory to British prestige and calculated to give offence appeared with increasing frequency in the organs of the Nationalist press. At first these articles were concerned mainly with the terms of the Anglo-Iraq Treaty, but from June onwards every opportunity was taken of misinterpreting the action of His Majesty's Government, and even local incidents were given a subtle twist in order to impute the most discreditable motives to the British Government and local British officials. This rule of vindictive press commentary became common to all political papers and little action was taken by the Iraqi Government to check it.



66. The actions of Yacou's band gave an unparalleled opportunity for vituperative comment on the policy of His Majesty's Government, who were accused of having deliberately fomented the whole trouble. From being purely anti-British, propaganda rapidly became anti-Christian in character. It was no longer confined to the press, but was encouraged by meetings and demonstrations, especially in the Mosul, Kirkuk and Arbil liwas. Though the situation never passed beyond the control of the civil authorities, the position at times was extremely delicate. It needed but a single incident to tip the scale in favour of extremist element, who, with public opinion in their favour, were capable of creating disorder on a very large scale, particularly in Mosul and Kirkuk, in both of which districts old sores still rankled.

67. In Mosul town the entire Christian community was confined to its own quarters and lived in perpetual fear of an organised attack. The army, given a lead by Bekr Sidki, adopted a most truculent manner, and their example was followed with avidity by the civil population. Various forms of petty persecution and tyranny were practised, and only the subservient attitude adopted by the Christians themselves obviated any incident.

68. In Kirkuk, where the memory of the incident with the Assyrian levies in 1924 still lingered, there was every possibility of local disturbances. Here, again, the Christian community were exceedingly careful to give no cause for offence. The situation was most strained between the 10th and 12th August, when the extradition of the entire Assyrian community was demanded and, failing this, an attack on the Christian element in the town seemed inevitable. The crisis passed, leaving in its wake an intensified anti-British feeling, which remained in evidence up to the end of August.

69. For some months there had been a good deal of ill-feeling between the Christian and Moslem employees of the Iraq Petroleum Company, and the grotesquely distorted stories of fighting in the north had the immediate effect of bringing this latent animosity to the surface at the three main centres of the company, Kirkuk, Haditha and Baiji. Prompt and energetic action by local officials prevented open hostilities at Kirkuk and Haditha, but fights occurred between Moslems and Christians at Baiji on the 8th and 12th August, during which one Assyrian was killed and several people were wounded. By the 15th August a general strike had been declared by the Moslem employees and rioting commenced, in which the local tribesmen took part. The situation was brought under control on the 16th August, after the arrival of strong police reinforcements from Bagdad.

It was clear that these Moslem activities were not spontaneous, but were being organised and directed by some outside political organisation.

70. I was convinced that this anti-British and anti-Christian propaganda was being fostered and spread by the Iraqi Government, and I considered that there was a very real danger of a situation arising throughout Northern Iraq which would be impossible for the Government to control. I therefore urged the British Ambassador to point out to the Iraqi Government the dangers which might arise should their policy be continued.

71. On the 29th August the Minister for the Interior visited Mosul and from that date there was a noticeable decrease in propaganda.

#### *Summary of Political Situation.*

72. As mentioned earlier in this report, much of the advice and many of the suggestions offered by British officials or the acting Ambassador were resented by the Iraqi Government, which was engaged in active anti-British and anti-Assyrian propaganda, and every obstacle was put in the way of my obtaining information.

73. It did not seem that any assurances from the King or Nuri carried any weight with the Iraqi Government, and I had the impression that the Iraqi Government was afraid to issue orders to the army, even if they sincerely wished to check their excesses.

74. The fact that Bekr Sidki was received by the Iraqi Government and the Amir Ghazi with such acclaim on his return from the operations, that he was promoted and decorated, and that no member of the army was censured in any way for what was well known to have taken place, gives an indication of the sharp divergence of opinion on this matter between the Iraqi Government and myself, with whom was associated the acting Ambassador.

#### *Deductions which may be drawn from the events of the Assyrian Disturbances.*

75. The events and tendencies narrated in this report indicate some directions in which we must recast our ideas upon our position and commitments in this country. They are set out below:—

- (a) Although there is a temporary improvement in the Iraqi Government's hostile attitude towards ourselves, I consider that unless this feeling is maintained we can no longer look upon the Iraq army as a force which will freely and mutually co-operate with us as in the past.
- (b) Although the Iraq army has improved, it has not displayed that advance in warlike qualities which was expected when Iraq was admitted as a member of the League, and it is not at present likely to be a very potent force with which to back up the civil administration, particularly in mountainous country. I consider this is chiefly due to the fact that nearly every Iraqi army officer of any standing is actively engaged in politics, and refuses to co-operate with the British advisers should his interests clash.
- (c) The civil administration has displayed remarkable powers of raising and controlling anti-British feeling, and this must always be taken into consideration when critical situations arise in dealing with internal security which may affect British lives and property.
- (d) The King's death has removed an important moderating and, on the whole, pro-British influence from the head of the Government. King Ghazi has, naturally, much less influence than his father, and is liable to come under the influence of men like Bekr Sidki, with whom he has been recently in close touch.
- (e) We must accept the fact that in future our intelligence may be inadequate, and we must endeavour to retain a certain number of intelligence officers in Iraq and augment the available information as much as possible.

#### *Security of Air Stations, and Future Composition of Air Defence Force.*

76. If the proposals put forward lately at Geneva are carried out, it is obvious that few, if any, Assyrians will remain in the future Air Defence Force, and I am definitely of the opinion that we cannot agree to detachments of the Iraq army being our only air base protection. I would accept an Air Base Defence Force of indigenous personnel provided it was recruited, officered and paid for by us and was not recruited from the towns which are generally affected by politics. In non-urban areas the population is less affected by politics and much more concerned with living in security, and of obtaining opportunities of increasing their worldly goods. Increased numbers of "Pegasus Victorias" are also available, and there is now a prospect of the Cairo-Bagdad route being shortly organised for night flying. Reinforcements, therefore, could more rapidly be flown over from Egypt than has been the case in the past.

C. S. BURNETT, *Air Vice-Marshal,*  
*Commanding, Iraq Command.*

*Air Headquarters, Iraq,*  
*December 14, 1933.*

#### *Appendix A.*

*Iraqi army forces at Badi Camp up to and including the 22nd July, 1933, were—*

Headquarters.  
1st Battalion Infantry.  
8th Battalion Infantry.  
1st Mountain Battery (4—2.75 guns).  
1 squadron, 3rd Cavalry.  
Detachment Military Police.



## Appendix B.

On the 31st July Iraqi army dispositions in the north were—

Dairabun (137 K/S.W. 30.C.).

Hajcol, consisting of—

Infantry—

1st Battalion Infantry.<sup>(1)</sup>

8th Battalion Infantry.

1 company and 1 machine-gun platoon, 2nd Battalion Infantry.

Artillery—

1st Mountain Battery, 4—2.75 guns.

1 section 3rd Mountain Battery, 2—2.75 guns.

Cavalry—

1 squadron, 3rd Cavalry.

1 machine-gun squadron, 3rd Cavalry.

1 troop, 3rd Cavalry.

Basitka Bala (137 L/N.E. 3.C.).

Imad Force Headquarters—

Amincol, consisting of—

4th Battalion Infantry, less 3 platoons.

7th Battalion Infantry.

*Platoon Posts on the Tigris.*

Supplied by 1st Battalion<sup>(1)</sup>—

Faish Khabur.

Shailkiya (137 K/S.W. 35d).

Muhammed - al - Raban (137

L/N.E. 1a).

Supplied by 4th Battalion<sup>(1)</sup>—

Tall Abu Khahin (137

L/N.W. 12d).

Zummar (137 L/N.E. 14c).

Khanieh (137 L/N.E. 22a).

<sup>(1)</sup> Less three platoons.

[E 962/190/93]

No. 120.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received February 12.)*

(No. 67.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, February 1, 1934.*

THERE seems to be a tendency in some quarters in England to belittle the value of the special position which Great Britain has acquired in Iraq and to emphasise the risks which we are supposed to run in carrying out the provisions of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of Alliance concluded in 1930. These critics bewail the large sums of British money poured out in Iraq, which they state have produced no return to His Majesty's Government but a crop of expensive and hazardous commitments. They even suggest that the Assyrian troubles last August, the origin and nature of which they entirely fail to comprehend, should be followed by some fundamental change in our relations with the Iraqi Government. Finally, they claim that we should cut our losses and reduce our stake in the country to that of the other foreign Powers who are represented at Bagdad.

It is true that, in the early days of the British occupation after the war, very large sums of money were spent on the maintenance of the British garrison in Iraq, ranging from £23 million in 1921-22 to £6 million in 1923-24. Since the military garrisons were replaced by the Royal Air Force on the recommendation of the Cairo Conference convened in 1921, there has been a progressive reduction in the charges which have been met by His Majesty's Treasury, till the figure of £350,000 was reached last year. This figure represents the "additional" cost of locating Royal Air Force forces (with their ancillary

services) in this country instead of in England, and is a charge which I believe is held to be justified by our strategic requirements in the Middle East, quite apart from the obligations of our alliance with Iraq.

I shall endeavour in this despatch to indicate in some detail the economic benefits to Great Britain which seem to me to be derived from the Treaty of Alliance and the special position which His Majesty's Government have built up in Iraq. In appraising the value of future benefits, it should not be forgotten that the potential wealth of Iraq is by no means inconsiderable, in fact certain foreign observers, who have recently visited this country, estimate that when the mineral and agricultural resources of Iraq have been scientifically developed its material wealth will eventually exceed that of Egypt.

2. His Majesty's Treasury has regularly received from the Iraqi Government an annual cash payment in respect of amortisation of the capital debt of the port of Basra. Up to the 1st April last the payments made on this account reached a total of £409,000. Twenty further annual payments are due to be made, of amounts progressively decreasing from £36,050 to £18,030, before the debt is entirely liquidated. These sums represent a refund of essential war-time expenditure incurred in Iraq by His Majesty's Government, and it is noteworthy that the rate of interest charged on the capital amount is 5 per cent. It is interesting to compare the steady revenue derived by the Treasury on war account from Iraq with the uncompromising refusal of the Persian Government to acknowledge any form of war debt as due to Great Britain. I am of opinion that Iraq would similarly repudiate her debt obligations if any serious diminution of British influence in this country should take place.

3. Under the terms of the financial agreement attached to the treaty of 1930, a sum of approximately £350,000 is due to be paid to His Majesty's Treasury by the Iraqi Government when the evacuation of the Royal Air Force stations at Mosul and Hinaidi has been completed.

4. His Majesty's Government are still the nominal owners of the Iraqi railways. Their financial interest in them will be capitalised at just over £2 million as soon as a railway corporation has been set up to administer them according to the agreement embodied in the Treaty of Alliance. It is true that this amount is to be represented by 6 per cent. preference shares, which are to be non-cumulative, with very little hope of a dividend, for the first twenty years of the corporation's existence, but the preponderating financial interest and the British control remain. Actual cash for the whole, or any part of this asset, may not be realisable, but some tangible benefit in one way or another will undoubtedly be secured from the Iraqi Government when they eventually acquire His Majesty's Government's interest in the railways. There are numerous advantages to British industry arising out of this dominant interest in the Iraqi railways which will be described later on in this despatch.

5. Letter No. 3, attached to the treaty of 1930, provides that "the Iraq Government will normally engage British subjects when in need of the services of foreign officials." There are 242 British officials in the employ of the Iraqi Government, including sixty-one in the railways and fifty-nine in the port of Basra and the Fao Bar Dredging Service, who annually receive not less than £250,000 in salaries. The rates of pay drawn by these officials are sufficiently generous to warrant the assumption that 25 per cent. of their emoluments, say, £60,000 annually, is remitted to England for expenditure or investment there. It is true that the numbers of these officials employed will gradually tend to decrease as the Iraqi becomes more and more qualified to take over the various technical and specialist posts now held by British subjects, but there are no signs at present of a landslide in this direction.

6. The Iraq (British Officials) Provident Fund receives annually about £60,000 in contributions from the Iraqi Government and the British officials. Practically the whole of this amount is remitted to the United Kingdom for investment, where it is eventually paid out to retirants from the fund. The fund itself is worth approximately £400,000, and has been built up in this way. The amounts paid out annually to retirants in the United Kingdom average £50,000. All these remittances represent fresh money flowing from Iraq into Great Britain to provide pensions for British subjects.

7. There are other economic benefits which accrue to the United Kingdom from this source. British officials are mainly employed in the technical and engineering departments of the Government and, when stores, machinery and



other Government requirements have to be purchased abroad, their connexion with the Government usually results in orders being placed with British firms. With but few exceptions, the whole of the heavy material and equipment required for the Posts and Telegraphs Department, the port of Basra, the railways and the Irrigation and Public Works Department has been purchased in the United Kingdom. This process has, to some extent, been developed by the valuable association with the Crown Agents for the Colonies and by a growing realisation that British goods can be relied on for quality and durability. When municipalities launch out into public utility schemes, British industry usually reaps the advantage. I would mention, as two examples out of many, the electric power plants recently purchased for the Basra and Mosul municipalities at a cost of £60,000 and £45,000 respectively. I have not before me figures showing the value of the orders which have been placed with British firms on behalf of Government Departments and public bodies, but I estimate that the business thereby falling to Great Britain has not been less than £200,000 annually. It is practically certain that, if the Iraqi Government employed foreign experts of a nationality other than British, this business would have gone elsewhere. In the future, as the number of British officials tends to decrease, greater responsibility will devolve on the Embassy and consulates, especially on the commercial secretary, to assist British firms to overcome the foreign competition which will undoubtedly develop as the spending power of the country increases.

8. Under article 6 of the annexure to the Treaty of Alliance, the Iraqi Government are bound to ensure that the armament and essential equipment of the Iraqi army and air force shall not differ in type from those of the Imperial Forces; also the Government employ a mission of British officers at a cost of £30,000 annually to advise them on military matters. Although it is not specifically stipulated that warlike material and equipment shall be purchased in Great Britain, this will normally happen so long as the British military mission is retained. For instance, the whole of the aircraft required for the Royal Iraqi Air Force, amounting to twenty-seven machines to date, has been ordered from British firms. The maintenance of strong and well-equipped land and air forces is part of the programme of all political parties in Iraq, and Parliament will probably be asked to sanction expenditure to the amount of £500,000 on military equipment in the near future. British firms should receive practically the whole of these orders.

9. The Iraqi Government have prudently decided that the share of the receipts from the exploitation of their oil resources shall be segregated from general revenues and shall be devoted to expenditure on productive capital works. The minimum sum receivable from this source is £400,000 "gold," rising to a guaranteed minimum of £600,000 "gold" when oil goes to production, probably in 1935. There are certain advances repayable to the company from these royalties in the first two or three years of production, but from 1937-38 onwards the net annual amount receivable from oil is estimated at not less than 1 million sterling. Foremost among the development schemes at present contemplated are the Habbaniyah Escape and Kut Barrage projects, each estimated to cost about £1,100,000. The contract for Habbaniyah will probably be given to a British firm in the near future, and it is anticipated that between £350,000 and £400,000 will be spent abroad upon the purchase of plant and materials for this undertaking. Other large orders should be forthcoming within the next few years and, if proper diligence is observed, British firms stand a reasonable chance of securing a large proportion of them. If the strength of the British connexion is allowed to wane, several million pounds' worth of business of this category might easily slip into foreign hands.

10. In addition to the programme of national capital works, heavy expenditure is bound to be incurred on extending and reconditioning the Iraqi railways. A railway bridge at Bagdad and an extension of the line to Mosul are urgent necessities, which must be carried out during the next few years. The estimated combined cost of these works is £1 million, of which approximately one-third will be spent upon the purchase of imported materials. It is probable that the whole of this business will go to the United Kingdom.

11. A detailed survey of a railway from Bagdad to Haifa is nearing completion, and the estimates are expected to reach a figure of about £8 million. The whole of the equipment and materials required for this railway, costing roughly between £2½ and £3 million, will probably be purchased in the United

Kingdom if the project meets with the approval of the British and Iraqi Governments.

12. The Fao Bar has been dredged, and a channel, navigable by heavily loaded tankers, drawing up to 30 feet, has been forced through the accumulation of silt at the mouth of the Shatt-el-Arab. The whole of the dredging equipment for this work, at a cost of £290,000, was purchased in Great Britain. A third dredger, costing approximately £120,000, is about to be ordered. It is true that the capital cost of this important work was originally financed by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, and that the dues from which the debt is being amortised are mostly paid by the tankers of the company, but the company have already received their money back with interest at 6 per cent. per annum. They will probably agree that it was a remunerative investment, as they have saved millions of pounds by being able to dispense with the costly alternative of lightering their tankers over the bar. The Fao Bar Dredging Service, in which the prosperity of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company is deeply concerned, is, for all practical purposes, a British institution.

13. I think that the preceding paragraphs will show that the Anglo-Iraqi Alliance has already proved economically valuable to Great Britain, and that British industry should continue to derive advantage from economic developments in Iraq. I will now refer briefly to the present predominance of Great Britain in the commerce of Iraq. During the past three years the total imports into Iraq, and the British share thereof, were as follows:—

	1930-31.	1931-32.	1932-33.
	£	£	£
Total imports	5,355,000	4,800,000	6,240,000
Imports from United Kingdom	1,665,000	1,305,000	2,179,000
United Kingdom percentage	31.10%	27.19%	34.92%

The above figures are taken from official Iraqi sources. It is interesting to compare them with the value of the British exports to Turkey and Persia over the same period:—

	1930-31.	1931-32.	1932-33.
	£	£	£
Iraq	1,665,000	1,305,000	2,179,000
Turkey	1,868,000	1,715,000	1,484,000
Persia	2,695,000	727,000	827,000

Thus Iraq, with 3 million inhabitants, took last year very nearly as much in British goods as Persia and Turkey, with 24 million inhabitants, combined. While the volume of British exports to Turkey and Persia is steadily diminishing, the flow of British goods into Iraq is steadily maintained. Iraq is one of the very few countries whose commerce shows a steady balance of trade in favour of the United Kingdom. In 1932-33 Iraq imported from the United Kingdom goods to the value of £1,221,000 more than she exported to the United Kingdom.

14. Numerous other comparisons of a similar nature could be drawn to demonstrate that Iraq, for her size, is an excellent customer. There is no reason to apprehend that British trade will diminish to any marked extent, as long as the privileged position in Iraq, secured to Great Britain by the Treaty of Alliance, is maintained. Iraq places no hampering restrictions on imports, and has no trade quota, no discriminatory tariffs, and no exchange difficulties or restrictions; her currency is linked to sterling, which in itself greatly facilitates commercial relationships with Great Britain.

15. Great Britain is deeply interested in the exploitation and development of the oil-fields of Iraq. At the present time Iraq's requirements of petrol, kerosene and oil are supplied almost entirely from the wells in the transferred territories on the Persian border, which are operated by a British subsidiary of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. The requirements which are not obtained from this source come from the Anglo-Persian Oil Company's wells in Persia. The distributing company, which employs about forty Englishmen in Iraq itself, has a virtual and very valuable monopoly of the sale of oil products in Iraq.



The operation and development of the rich oil-bearing area round about Kirkuk is in the hands of the Iraq Petroleum Company, which is nominally one-fourth British, but is under British direction. The work involved in drilling and testing the area has cost approximately £3½ million, and has given employment to a large number of people, many of whom, apart from the actual drillers, have been British subjects. The work on the construction of the pipe-line, the pumping stations and other works preparatory to bringing the wells to production will involve the expenditure of many more millions. Many British subjects are employed on these works. British firms have received a large proportion of orders for materials, and contracts have been placed in the United Kingdom for the supply of pipes, heavy transport, pumping engines, to the value of at least £1½ million. The economic value to Palestine of an oil terminus at the port of Haifa, built by a loan guaranteed by His Majesty's Government, is considerable. The routing of the main channel of the pipe-line to Haifa, by which this has been made possible, was ensured by the influence of the Anglo-Iraqi Alliance. When the company reaches the productive stage, with its pumping stations and water wells spaced over the Syrian desert and the wastes of Transjordan, British personnel will be required in appreciable numbers to man these outposts, in addition to those needed to carry out the work of the company in Iraq.

The only other concession in the oil-bearing area has been given to the British Oil Development Company, a British registered company. Their activities have been restricted up to the present, and there has been no substantial development of the area. It is probable that a considerable part of the necessary capital will be raised in Great Britain, and the board have publicly stated that, where practicable, orders for the material required will be placed with British manufacturers.

British interests are, therefore, very closely bound up with the promising oil industry in Iraq.

16. The foreign commercial interests in Iraq are, owing to the existence of the British connexion, predominantly British. With the exception of a foreign department store or two, and one American date-growing and exporting firm, there are no foreign business houses of any importance other than British. The greater part of the country's foreign trade is carried in British ships. The foreign capital sunk in the country is almost exclusively British. Two out of the three banks are entirely British, including the Eastern Bank, which handles all the Government cash; the capital of the third bank, the Ottoman, is about one-third British and has a number of British directors. All important insurance business is in the hands of British firms. In another sphere of activity, the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company is a long-established British Company, linked to the British India Steamship Company, operating, with but one native competitor, river transport on the River Tigris between Basra and Bagdad. It owns a fleet of eighteen steamers and has about £250,000 invested in Iraq. In every direction, despite the intense Japanese competition, British commercial influence remains paramount. Iraq is in a good position to take advantage of the economic revival, of the imminence of which there are signs. There is money waiting to be spent and large orders to be taken, and there is a good prospect of British interests reaping substantial benefit from these developments.

17. This despatch is primarily concerned with the economic advantages which accrue to Great Britain from the special connexion which we maintain with Iraq under the terms of the 1930 Treaty of Alliance. There are also obvious strategic advantages.

The important waterway of the Shatt-el-Arab, no less than the Persian Gulf, is virtually controlled by British seamen, and is free of all restrictions for the use of the ships of His Majesty's navy. Our alliance with Iraq provides a guarantee for the security of the Anglo-Persian oil-fields. The ships of His Majesty's navy will doubtless obtain the bulk of their fuel in future at the convenient port of Haifa, from what is, perhaps, the richest oil-field in the world, whose head works, pumping stations and pipe-line are situated within the orbit of the control of the Royal Air Force. Finally, for a length of 700 miles, Iraq forms a vital link in the chain of our Imperial communications by air which we cannot afford to leave unprotected. We have sunk millions in this country in less propitious times and are just beginning to obtain a return on our expenditure. It is not a question of

throwing good money after bad, but of consolidating, at a relatively trifling cost, a hard-won position of pre-eminence on one of the world's important highways.

I am confident that any panicky proposals for drastic treaty revision or "scuttle" will receive short shrift at the hands of His Majesty's Government. It is generally admitted that Iraq cannot stand on its own legs without the assistance of a great Power for many years to come. We have undertaken to provide this assistance for twenty-five years, and in the process, if we use our opportunities aright, we should be able to reap valuable material benefits to which British sacrifices in blood and treasure have given us an unassailable title. There are others both ready and eager to take our place if we pusillanimously abandon our trust.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

[E 1311/1/93]

No. 121.

*Sir W. Seeds to Sir John Simon.—(Received February 28.)*

(No. 51.)

Sir,

*Petropolis, February 7, 1934.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 22 of yesterday's date I have the honour to forward herewith translation of the interview given by the Minister of Labour to the *Nação* on the 3rd instant regarding the proposed Assyrian immigration into Brazil.

2. The Provisional Government are now experiencing one of the disadvantages of a quasi-constitutional régime in the form of the Constituent Assembly, which insists on its democratic right of opening its mouth and letting it say what it likes. A recent suspension for forty-eight hours of a certain newspaper, which had not respected the censorship, gave rise to animated debates wherein the crimes of the censors were ruthlessly exposed. As is usual in censorship cases, the authorities were shown to have exercised their powers in a manner not only arbitrary but also pre-eminently foolish. For instance, it seems difficult to defend the censorship's prohibition of any mention some weeks ago of the fact that a wastrel son of the Chief of the Government had suffered a serious accident consequent on his furious driving, while inebriated, of a motor car which did not belong to him. The Assembly seems finally to have extorted from the Government an assurance that press censorship would not be applied to the reporting of parliamentary debates—a decision which cuts the ground from under the authorities' feet. I was consequently not surprised when the Minister for Foreign Affairs told me that to stop the anti-Assyrian movement by press censorship was out of the question, and it is of course impossible to argue that such a mass immigration is not a legitimate subject for public debate.

3. To report and translate the swarm of articles and speeches would be a toilsome business for my staff, while for you, Sir, to undertake the perusal of so much wrong-headed prejudice would serve no purpose beyond creating an unfortunate impression of the worst side of Brazilian nature. I have, however, the honour to transmit the manifesto of a body known as "The Society of the Friends of Alberto Torres," which is typical, but by no means exhaustive, of what is printed and said on the subject. (I should explain that the Alberto Torres in question was a philosopher, who is suspected of having also been a lunatic). As regards the proceedings in the Assembly, it is better to overlook the Deputy who, as an opponent of both Japanese and Assyrian immigration, is reported to have said that "England is trying to convert Brazil into an American China," or the other Deputy who, by manipulating the statistics of the Nansen Bureau, claimed to prove that the Assyrians were among the Russian Jews and the Armenians whom it had been found necessary to settle, not on the land, but in the towns of the Near East. But I enclose translation of what with serious though ultra-patriotic Brazilians might carry more weight, namely, a statement by a Dr. Paulo Vagler—described as a technical expert of the Immigration Department—which was read out in the Assembly and which is that of an alleged eye-witness convinced of the undesirable qualities of the Assyrians.

I have, &c.

WILLIAM SEEDS.



*Extract from the Nação of February 4, 1934.*

(Translation.)

THE question of the immigration of Assyrian families, which has given rise to manifestations and interferences [*sic*] by the League of Nations and has had such lively reactions in criticisms and press notices, led us to visit the Minister of Labour, the member of the Provisional Government specially charged to advise on the subject.

Though we called upon Sr. Salgado Filho without warning, he was good enough to receive us immediately, and his answers to our first questions showed him to be completely familiar with the subject, both in its broad issues and its details, on both of which he discoursed without consulting or fetching papers and files.

As we cannot set down all the points of his exposition, we shall endeavour, while completing or adding to the material for discussion, to bring out the essential results of our enquiries, and shall refrain from exaggerating the value of this evidence, which we picked up so unexpectedly and which we are careful to summarise with the greatest fidelity, by casting it in an impersonal and serene mould. For it was really in such a way that the Minister of Labour spoke to us, beginning by saying that the action of the Brazilian Government in regard to the immigration of Assyrian families to Brazil had been wrongly interpreted. There is no question of the development of an immigration policy. Our action in the matter is limited to refusing the entry of harmful elements into our country, to organising a strict supervision over those who wish to come here, in order that only agriculturists and healthy persons should come, and to compelling those who seek the necessary permission, as is happening in the case under discussion, to guarantee, under the seal of the League of Nations and the Nansen Bureau, that the newcomers shall remain in rural localities. In fact, we did not start negotiations nor did we attract these foreigners to the native soil; we merely agreed that the "Companhia de Terras Norte do Paraná," which owns an area of 500,000 alqueires, should use part of it to settle Christians saved from Mussulman persecution, who will find in work on the land and in cultivation of the fields the means of subsistence and of protection for their future.

Apart from conditions of health, to guarantee the physical fitness of the newcomers, we shall require an assurance that they are accustomed to working the soil and cultivating it. The colonising company, which already possesses not only a railway that penetrates the zone where its colonists are to be settled, but also a city—Londrina—recently founded in its vicinity, will be exclusively responsible for all the expenses of transport and settlement, and the Brazilian Government will merely supervise the quality of the immigrants and see that they betake themselves to rural parts and remain there, under the responsibility, not only of the company which will settle them, but also of the Nansen Committee and the League of Nations.

Individuals who are not proved agriculturists, and are not proposing to work on the land, will not be permitted to embark and will not land here. We are shortly expecting the arrival of a delegation headed by the English General Browne, who is thoroughly acquainted with the customs and life of this people, to ascertain on the spot whether the plan offers an assurance of success for colonisation. We shall then have the opportunity of formulating in detail the guarantees which we require, to ensure that there will be no turning aside from their appointed and only destination by these families which are looking for a new homeland with the object of contributing to its development.

Anything else that may have been said is pure fantasy, designed to belittle that which is being done from lofty and patriotic motives.

The *Nação* can affirm that the only Assyrians who will come are those who, being strong and healthy agriculturists, proceed to the north of Paraná, brought there by a colonising company of great possibilities, without any intervention on the part of the Federal Government except, I repeat, for the observance of those and other conditions to be imposed.

*Extract from the Jornal do Commercio of February 5, 1934.*

(Translation.)

#### NATION OR COLONY?

UNDER this heading, the Society of Friends of Alberto Torres has sent us the following communication by Sr. Raul de Paula:—

On the question of the immigration of Assyrians to Brazil, the Minister of Labour granted an interview to the *Nação* on the 4th instant, which contains statements that confirm what the press has been saying on the subject. Modern imperialism continues to fight with its traditional weapons: militarism, capital, migrations and suggestions. This belief of Alberto Torres applies completely to the present case, for this proclaimed migration of 20,000 Assyrian families to Brazil is merely an Imperialist imposition upon our country. Let us see:

According to the words of Sr. Salgado Filho, the arrival of these people is the result "merely of agreeing to the Companhia de Terras Norte do Paraná, which owns an area of 500,000 alqueires of land of 24,200 square metres each [*sic*]. The colonising company which already possesses not only a railway that penetrates the zone where its colonists are to be settled, but also a city—Londrina—recently founded in its vicinity, will be exclusively responsible for all the expenses of transport and settlement, and the Brazilian Government will merely supervise the quality of the immigrants, and see that they betake themselves to rural parts and remain there, under the responsibility, not only of the company which will settle them, but also of the Nansen Committee and of the League of Nations."

These are the words of the Minister as reported in the interview. And most opportune they are, because, we repeat, they only confirm what the whole Brazilian press has already stated. The coming of these Assyrians was thus a decision which merely received the agreement of the Brazilian Government. The directors of this company are English politicians, including Mr. Asquith, who only wished to carry out England's policy, which was to rid herself of these turbulent people whose continued sojourn in Iraq does not suit her. The Companhia de Terras Norte do Paraná, which owns 500,000 alqueires of land and a railway that is reaching to our frontier with Paraguay, is only serving the interests of the English Government, for the lands which it possesses are to be sold and not to be given to anyone, nor to cover the expenses of the transport and settlement of thousands of families. The average price of land sold by the company is 500 milreis per alqueir.

If the company has land to give away and wishes to settle colonists, why does it not do so for Brazilians, who live in their millions without a roof and without a piece of land?

As to the agricultural qualities which the English claim for these people, and the Minister affirms in his interview, they are denied by Dr. Hortilio Souza Araujo, of the Oswaldo Cruz Institute, who travelled through their territory and saw these Assyrians in a state of vagabondage and disorder, according to a letter published in the press and addressed by him to the Society of Friends of Alberto Torres.

A few questions:

Was Dr. Oliveira Vianna, the adviser of the Ministry of Labour and one of the greatest authorities we possess on the subject, consulted? We appeal to his Excellency to express his views on the coming of these people and their assimilation in our country.

Have the Companhia Norte do Paraná and the League of Nations replaced the Colonisation Department of the Ministry of Labour? For the latter also has as yet expressed no view on this important subject.

To attract or to tolerate mass migrations to our country will always be an outrage against the nation and against humanity, for they alter the process of the natural formation of the population in harmony with physical and social conditions, said Alberto Torres. The mass entry of Japanese, Assyrians and other foreigners has only served to alter the process of national formation.

One last word.



According to the calculations of Dr. Nelson Xavier, superintendent of the Transport Works in São Francisco, about 20,000 of the inhabitants of the north-west, who were driven into the great valley by the last drought, died there. Mario Casasanta will shortly publish a book which will give a tragic picture of what happened there. That population of ours has never found any Brazilian or foreign company to endeavour to colonise them, save for the work which the local farmers may give within their limited possibilities.

It is no matter for surprise that we try to do everything for the foreigner in our country. It was ever so. With Germans, with Japanese, with Poles, and now with Assyrians.

It only remains for the Society of Friends of Alberto Torres to appeal to all students at the higher schools in Brazil to rise in an organised movement and seek by all means to prevent the coming of these undesirable Assyrians, by showing that Brazil is no longer a colony, but must show herself to the world as a nation!

Enclosure 3 in No. 121.

*Extract from the Nação of February 6, 1934.*

*Extract from Statement by Sr. Paulo Vagler read out in Constituent Assembly. (Translation.)*

I HAVE made personal observations of this people in the course of my scientific tour through Kurdistan and Persia. I am in a position to be able to affirm, from my own knowledge, that the statements made in this sense in the Constituent Assembly are fully justified.

It is undeniable that if there exists in the world a race hostile to agriculture, that race is the Assyrians, or rather the Assurys as they call themselves.

The little agriculture they do is of an entirely primitive character, and usually badly cared for. The Assurys' ideal is to be money-lenders. Whenever they can, they establish themselves in the oriental cities and villages and plunder those who are simple enough to borrow money from them.

Politically they are always ready to start revolts from which they hope to reap material profit. On the frontiers of the lands they inhabit they organise themselves into dangerous bands of smugglers and robbers, whose "agricultural activities" consist in plundering the flocks of agriculturists of other races.

It is quite ridiculous to assert that these people can form agricultural colonies either in Brazil or in any other part of the world. It is not for nothing that Turkey, Iraq and Persia do not want them at any price in their territories, though it should be noted that Persia receives good agricultural colonists with open arms, no matter where they come from.

It is also very significant that England, who knows them well, does not want them in her colonies.

[E 1422/1170/93]

No. 122.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received March 5.)*

(No. 102.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, February 22, 1934.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 802 of the 19th December, I have the honour to furnish you with a political appreciation of the extent to which possible anti-British developments in Iraq might threaten the safety of British subjects or be directed against the British forces stationed in the country.

2. Since any outbreak of disorder which occurs may indirectly endanger British lives and property, whether inspired by anti-British sentiment or not, it

seems preferable that the question should be considered on the somewhat broader basis of the disturbances which may possibly take place, and the extent to which British lives and property would thereby be endangered and British forces involved.

3. In the history of this country, from the beginning of the century up to the time of the British occupation, the great majority of the outbreaks of disorder which have occurred have been brought about by the tribes and have been due either to their natural lawlessness and their dislike of governmental control or to maladministration. From 1918 to the conclusion of the period of British mandatory control, which ended in October 1932, the tribes remained the most common source of potential disorder, but their restlessness was seldom, if ever, inspired by hostility towards the British. The insurrection of 1920 was a notable exception and was due to the combined influence of post-war unrest and Nationalist agitation originating from the towns. The long hostilities with Sheikh Mahmud fall into a special category, and are traceable to the personal vanity of the sheikh, the growth of Kurdish Nationalist feeling which followed the British occupation of the Kurdish districts, and the dreams of Kurdish independence which were fostered by the Treaty of Sèvres. Kurdish nationalism has, however, never been anti-British, and is only opposed to British policy when it causes a revolt against the gradual spread of administrative control by the Central Government. Some minor disorders occurred from time to time from intertribal quarrels and may so occur again, but these being essentially local in their significance and not directed against constituted authority, are not pertinent to the matter under consideration.

4. The tribes have not, however, been the only source of potential disorder, and the most serious, but not the most persistent threat of public disturbance has always developed from Bagdad on occasions when some powerful political group has sought to exploit a favourable situation. Examples are the anti-treaty agitation of 1924 and the so-called general strike of 1931. These events did not, it is true, call for the use of military force, but their threat to the power and influence of the Government was, on account of the motives, vigour and widespread influence of the agitation which lay behind them, far more serious than that of the purely tribal disturbances, to deal with many of which British and Iraqi forces have had to be employed. I may illustrate my point by a recent example. The rebellion of the Sheikh of Barzan in 1932, while it called for the use of nearly two brigades of ground troops and was suppressed mainly through the decisive action of the Royal Air Force, never threatened the stability of the Central Government, though I hesitate to say what might have happened had not the Assyrian mutiny in the summer of that year been nipped in the bud. On the other hand, the strike of 1931 at one time came very near to paralysing the Government, not only within the capital, but also in a number of important provincial towns. Again, while the Barzan troubles never in any way threatened British civilian lives or property, both might have suffered heavily if the mobs which thronged the streets of Basra and Bagdad during the strike had got out of hand.

5. I have referred briefly to the past because an appreciation of the possibility of future disorders must be based in the main on deductions from past experience, modified, in particular, by consideration of the changes which have subsequently taken place in our position in this country. The tribes of the Euphrates, the Kurds and the political agitators are likely to continue to be the main sources of danger, but the probability of their activities being anti-British has been considerably altered by the withdrawal of His Majesty's Government from all direct participation in the administration of the country. It will be convenient to discuss them separately.

#### *The Tribes.*

6. The tribes in Iraq are all well armed with rifles mostly collected during the war. The punitive operations which followed the insurrection of 1920 included the imposition of heavy rifle fines on many of the most troublesome, but they still have sufficient arms and ammunition to enable them to take the field quite effectively if they wish to do so. Moreover, in many tribal areas, notably in Amara, Mosul, Arbil and Sulaimani, no fines of this kind were imposed, and the tribes there are now particularly well armed. Trouble with the tribes in



the future, as in the past, would most probably be caused either by the enforcement of some ill-timed and unsuitable law, by Shia intrigues instigated possibly from Persia, or by the inefficiency of local officials. Or it might arise merely from open defiance of the authority of the Government, and have no reason other than the inherent hostility of the tribes to any form of control. It is somewhat difficult to make a certain forecast of the possibility of conflict arising from maladministration. There is undoubtedly a permanent element in the administration, and, it may be said, in the Government, unsympathetic to the tribes and inexperienced in dealing with them. On the other hand, there are others with long experience of tribal affairs and a live appreciation of the danger of introducing methods of administration likely to exasperate tribal feeling. My impression is that with the increase of their real responsibilities, Iraqi statesmen and senior officials have grown noticeably more flexible and understanding in their dealings with, and less doctrinaire in their attitude towards, the tribes. This impression has been strengthened by the wise caution with which the present Government have been recently handling the very delicate task of introducing a system of national service for the army. Future Governments will, however, have to walk warily to avoid difficulties with one or other of the big tribal groups of the country. It is pertinent to note that the abolition of the old method of collecting taxes on land produce direct from the producers has removed a common source of friction between the Government and the tribes. There is, of course, a special element of danger in the tribes of the Euphrates, where the situation is rendered particularly delicate by the fact that the tribes are Shiah closely under the influence of the ulema of the Holy Cities of Najaf and Karbala, who are traditionally ill-disposed towards a Government always composed of a dominant Sunni majority. It must, however, be borne in mind that as His Majesty's Government now take no part in the administration of the country, the extent to which British residents might become the object of hostility in any tribal outbreaks provoked by official action would be much less than in the past, and in the future the leaders of any such movement would, in my opinion, be much more disposed to regard the British element in this country as a possible friend and mediator than as an object of dislike. Moreover, there are very few British subjects living in the areas where tribal disorders of this kind are likely to occur. The danger of outbreaks of unprovoked tribal lawlessness is steadily decreasing as education spreads and familiarity with the usual forms of administration extends. It has not yet been eliminated, but the risk of harm to British subjects on this account is comparatively slight. They and their property are mostly grouped in towns well removed from the more lawless tribal areas, and the few who reside in the remoter districts could, if threatened, be conveyed by aircraft to places of safety.

#### *The Kurds.*

7. The possibility of a future revival of the Kurdish Nationalist movement calls for separate consideration. In the past Sheikh Mahmud has been the only leader who has proved himself able to organise this movement on a large scale. He is now living under surveillance in Bagdad, and although Nationalist sentiment cannot be said to be altogether dead among the Kurds, it is certainly to a very great extent dormant. We cannot, however, be certain that something may not occur in the future to revive it, and in that event Sheikh Mahmud, or some other popular leader, might create a delicate situation with which the Iraqi Government would have to reckon. National consciousness is undoubtedly strongest among the Kurds of the Kirkuk, Suleimani and Arbil liwas, and in the event of some form of Nationalist uprising taking place the position of the British employees and the property of the Iraq Petroleum Company at Kirkuk might give rise to anxiety. As I have already said, however, Kurdish nationalism has never been anti-British, and the Kurds are on the whole markedly well disposed towards His Majesty's Government. I consider, therefore, that, even if the Iraqi Government were temporarily unable to control the situation, there would be a good prospect that the officials of the company might be able to come to an arrangement with the insurgent leaders for the safety of their personnel and property. In the Kurdish districts of Mosul, Nationalist feeling is only embryonic, and there is no reason to anticipate any dangerous movement of this kind there.

#### *Political Agitation.*

8. I will now consider the possibility of a repetition in the future of the kind of disturbance to which I have already referred in paragraph 4: that is to say, disorders inspired by political agitators. I have suggested that in the past these agitators have been more dangerous than purely tribal disturbances, and in my opinion it is from movements of this kind that there is most to be feared in the future. The politically-minded classes are yearly strengthened and enlarged by the output of the secondary schools, and the younger generation of Iraqi students are by no means free from contamination by communistic and other exaggerated ideas. They are also natural adepts at propaganda and delight in forming secret societies for subversive objects. The organisation of the trade and craft guilds of the towns is also steadily improving, and behind them there is the sinister mob of the cities, always ready to turn out for any sort of demonstration which may lead to a chance of loot. The leaders of political opinion, the politicians, and the lawyers, are well aware of the inflammable material which they have ready to hand, and calling out the students to organise the mob is a gambit of the political game to which recourse is likely to become more frequent. There is no strong reason, however, to anticipate that the Government will not normally be able to deal with trouble of this kind, but a real danger would arise if the Government in power were themselves to employ these instruments in a political dispute, especially if the dispute were with Great Britain. We saw last summer the power which agitation can rapidly develop when tacitly connived at by the authorities, and the fanatical anti-British complexion it may assume when the attitude of His Majesty's Government is felt to be antagonistic to popular sentiment. If a serious difference were to arise in the future between His Majesty's Government or one of the major British or semi-British institutions operating in this country (such as the Anglo-Persian Oil Company or the Iraq Petroleum Company) and the Iraqi Government, and the latter, with a view to bringing pressure to bear on the other party in the dispute, were to call up the forces of disorder, a situation would be likely to develop in which the safety of British lives and property would be seriously jeopardised. In contrast with the position in the event of tribal disturbances, the worst storm centres would, in any political upheaval, be the towns, and as it is in the towns that British subjects are for the most part concentrated, the mobs incited by the agitators might quickly become a menace, and if, as might easily happen, the Government proved unable to control the forces which they had let loose, British lives would be in urgent need of protection.

9. It follows from the above considerations that, so far as it is possible to forecast the future, the danger to British lives and property for which preparation should in the main be made is that of an outbreak of political agitation coupled with mob violence in the towns. In the past the military problem of defence has been generally that of protecting British subjects in the outlying districts and of arranging for their removal to the towns. For the future, the more important consideration should be that of affording protection to those in the towns, especially in Mosul, Kirkuk, Bagdad and Basra, where 80 per cent. of the British population are located. Defence schemes against this danger have been worked out by Air Headquarters in Bagdad and are continually brought up to date.

10. To reach this conclusion from a knowledge of existing circumstances has not been difficult. To utter a certain opinion as to whether or not a political crisis will develop in the future on the lines which I have suggested in the two preceding paragraphs would require the gift of prophecy. The factors are too incalculable for sure appreciation. I can only record my opinion that no conditions obtain at present which make it in any way necessary to anticipate the imminence of events of this kind. Our relations with the present Iraqi Government are excellent. Such outstanding matters as exist are unlikely to give rise to serious friction in their solution and, provided His Majesty's Government continue to help Iraq steadily along the road towards independence and prosperity and to give a wise direction to the activities of British commercial institutions in the country, no dispute should occur of such severity as to provoke a dangerous conflict or trial of strength between the two Governments.

11. I have left to the end the consideration of the safety of the British and other European personnel on the Iraq Petroleum Company pipe-line, and the protection of the pipe-line itself, because this is a question quite different from that of the general security of British interests. By far the greatest length of the



pipe-line passes through desert country very sparsely inhabited by nomad Bedouin tribes. These are well armed and naturally lawless, but it should not be difficult for the company's security service to arrange for the safety of their personnel and property by a properly organised system of tribal guards, who readily understand the meaning of local responsibility. There is no anti-British or anti-foreign feeling among the Bedouin, and all that has to be guarded against in normal circumstances is their natural predatory instincts. In general, however, they are afraid to commit offences against Europeans, and I have not heard that the company has had any trouble with them while laying the line. The tribes have naturally benefited from the demand for labour, and in many other small ways from the company's activities, and they are not at all hostile to its representatives. In the event of a serious dispute between the Government and the company, it is not impossible that someone might be foolish enough to incite the Bedouin to acts of sabotage. The probability of this happening is, however, remote, as any Government could hardly fail to realise that the Iraqi Treasury would be a heavy loser through such acts. I consider, therefore, that there is very little likelihood of serious danger arising to the pipe-line or its personnel, especially when the bulk of the Royal Air Force has been removed to Dhibban. The establishment of British air squadrons in a central position in the country is the best means of ensuring tranquillity in Iraq. The risk of the armed forces of our ally being turned against us is one which, in my opinion, need not seriously be considered in present circumstances.

I have, &c.  
F. H. HUMPHRYS.

[E 1604/1038/93]

No. 123.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received March 12.)*

(No. 116.)  
Sir,

*Bagdad, March 1, 1934.*

I HAVE already reported in my telegram No. 42 of the 21st February that a new Cabinet was formed by Jamil Beg Madfai on that date, owing to the fact that his colleagues in the former Cabinet were unable to compose their personal differences and agree to serve together.

2. The causes of dissension among the members of the previous Cabinet were not in themselves important, but have been exaggerated by mutual jealousies, which the young King was unable to appease. Rustam Haidar, the Minister of Economics and Communications and a Shia, who had been the subject of violent attacks in the press on the ground that he was of Syrian extraction and therefore a foreigner, had sought to improve his position in the country by coquetting mildly with the Shias of the Holy Places. His actions were magnified by Naji Shaukat, the Minister of Interior, into dangerous intrigues which aimed at self-aggrandisement. In addition to this, Rustam Haidar had wounded the vanity of the Minister of Finance by inviting tenders for the Kut Barrage scheme without consulting him. Nuri Pasha had summoned Jafar Pasha from London with the intention, it was believed, of putting him into the palace as King Ghazi's principal adviser in the place of Ali Jaudat Beg, with a view to forming a Government composed of his own followers with palace support, when Jamil Madfai's Cabinet resigned. Yasin Pasha, leader of the Opposition, was credited with the ambition of becoming Prime Minister, and forming a Cabinet exclusively from the Ikha party. In that event, it was thought that he would secure the dissolution of Parliament and pack the new Chamber with his own supporters. A further cause of schism was found in the policy pursued by the Minister of Education, Saleh Beg Jabur, which was repugnant to the majority of his colleagues. He had, however, been the nominee of the Prime Minister, who felt unable, without loss of face, to replace him, except at the expense of some of his critics.

3. In these circumstances, the King was loath to run the risk of placing either Nuri Pasha or Yasin Pasha at the head of a Government formed on purely party lines, and succeeded in persuading Jamil Madfai to reconstitute his Cabinet from men who would consent to work with the present Parliament as a

National Government. His Majesty also decided to show impartiality by leaving out Rustam Haidar and Saleh Beg Jabur.

4. The new Cabinet is composed entirely of ex-Cabinet Ministers, the majority of whom have colourless records. The brains and experience are chiefly centred in the volatile personality of Naji Pasha Suwaidi, Minister of Finance, who was Prime Minister in 1929. With the exception of Jamil Madfai, the only member of the previous Government who has resumed office is Jamal Baban, Minister of Justice.

5. The general verdict is that it is a weak Cabinet which can be trusted to work harmoniously and to carry out routine work satisfactorily, but is likely to succumb if faced by serious opposition in the Parliament. The programme which it has published, and which forms an enclosure to this despatch, contains nothing new or striking, but has been well received by the local press. Unless Nuri Pasha and Yasin Pasha, who represent the driving force in the political life of Iraq, are content to remain out of office for a considerable time, I do not anticipate that the new Government will last more than a few months.

6. It is, perhaps, noteworthy that in commenting on the programme of the new Government, Yasin Pasha urged that the time had now come for all parties to concentrate their whole attention on the country's commerce and finances.

7. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran and to the Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &c.  
F. H. HUMPHRYS.

Enclosure in No. 123.

*Programme of the Second Madfai Cabinet.*

*Speech by Prime Minister.*

OUR Cabinet depends on God and the confidence of His Majesty the King and that of Parliament. We have resolved to conduct the affairs of State in accordance with the principles contained in the programme of the previous Cabinet. That programme was made known to Parliament a few months ago. Nevertheless, the Cabinet wish to explain to you the more important objects underlying the principles in question:—

#### *Foreign Policy.*

To maintain the friendly and amicable relations existing between Iraq and other States, and to endeavour to strengthen these relations.

To expand diplomatic representation in countries with which Iraq has political and economic relations, with a view to strengthening Iraq's positions abroad and promoting her economic interests.

To enact the necessary legislation for regulating the conditions of service and determining the duties of officials of the diplomatic and consular service.

To enquire into the settlement of subsidiary questions outstanding between Iraq and Great Britain, such as those concerning the port, railways and aerodrome guards.

#### *Domestic Policy.*

To maintain the peace and tranquillity now prevailing throughout the country; to increase the efficiency of the police force and complete the equipment of this force; to enquire into the establishment of new hospitals; to raise the standard of technical efficiency in health institutions; and to increase the number of dispensaries throughout the country.

To complete the establishments of the Census Department.

#### *Financial Policy.*

To finance the State administration from normal receipts, and assign extraordinary receipts to the carrying out of major capital works; to establish a permanent cadre for State officials on sound bases, and to see that no expansion



in establishments is carried out except in cases of unavoidable necessity; to improve and increase natural products, and exert all possible efforts for finding fresh and suitable markets for disposal of these products.

#### *Judicial Affairs.*

To ensure fair administration of justice and the proper application of laws; to expedite the enactment of necessary legislation, such as the draft Criminal and Civil Procedure Laws, and the draft Law of Commerce, and to draw up bases for a civil code.

#### *Economic Policy.*

To carry out development schemes already decided upon, such as the Gharraf and Habbaniyah schemes, the two projected bridges in Bagdad, and the Naqarrat (waterfalls on the Euphrates), and other necessary works; and to make the necessary arrangements for the financing of these schemes and works and their early completion.

#### *Defence Affairs.*

To adopt the necessary preparatory measures for the enforcement of the National Defence (or Service) Law; and to increase the efficiency of the existing army.

#### *Educational Affairs.*

To combat illiteracy; to improve the curriculum of instruction; to expand primary and village schools as far as possible; and to adopt measures calculated to improve the qualifications of students for educational missions abroad.

The Cabinet realises the serious nature of the obligations laid upon their shoulders, and are conscious of what the country expect from them. They will therefore exert their utmost for the realisation of the hopes set on them, and they pray God to help them to succeed in their efforts.

[E 1686/1/93]

No. 124.

*Sir W. Seeds to Sir John Simon.—(Received March 15.)*

(No. 72.)

Sir,

*Petropolis, February 23, 1934.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 23 of the 6th instant, I have the honour to report that, owing to the carnival, the arrival of the League of Nations Mission in connexion with the proposed Assyrian immigration passed almost unnoticed by the press. By the time the newspapers had settled down again to normal activities, the mission had left for São Paulo. Brigadier Browne did, however, give at any rate one press interview, of which a typical result was that a usually serious newspaper asserted that he had not produced any good argument in favour of the Assyrians, except their proficiency at football.

2. The Spanish Ambassador, who accompanied the mission at their visits to the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Labour, tells me that these interviews passed off well and that he was able to have a useful conversation with one of the hitherto obstructive officials of the Immigration Department. Neither of the two Ministers seemed at all shaken by the persistence of the anti-Assyrian campaign.

3. The Society of the Friends of Alberto Torres has by no means relaxed its efforts. It claims to have won the support of the Minister of Agriculture, Sr. Juárez Tavora, who is not only one of the leaders of the "Tenentes," but who, as a representative of the north, is amenable to pressure on behalf of the sufferers from the drought in the Ceará region. The Minister of Labour, now on a trip to Rio Grande do Sul, has gallantly combated this aspect of the agitation by pointing in a press interview to the well-known fact that the men of Ceará have always shown an incomprehensible but invincible reluctance to being removed from their desert into more hospitable regions.

4. An interpellation was made in the Constituent Assembly on the subject with various speeches against, but none in favour of, the Assyrians. In reply, the leader of the House put the Government's point of view that it was not within the competence of the Assembly to discuss such matters until after the Constitution

had been voted, but he nevertheless read out a letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, of which I have the honour to enclose a translation. It is unfortunate that Dr. Cavalcanti appears to have forgotten his promise to me—given previous to the issue of the interview by the Minister of Labour, reported in my despatch No. 51 of the 7th instant—to say nothing regarding a possible repatriation of the immigrants. We must, however, recognise that the Government are in a difficult position, and we can only hope that the Assyrians do not read Brazilian parliamentary debates. The interpellation was finally withdrawn, but its supporters were able to claim that they seemed to have the approval of the Assembly.

I have, &c.

WILLIAM SEEDS.

P.S., *February 24.*—The Society of the Friends of Alberto Torres has published in to-day's press a report of a public meeting held under its auspices; it now claims to have the support of the Ministers of Agriculture, War and Marine, and issues an appeal "for its campaign against British imperialism which seems to impose on Brazil the immigration of Bedouins—a 'job' instigated by the Paraná Plantations Company."

W. S.

Enclosure in No. 124.

*Extract from Jornal do Commercio, February 22, 1934.*

(Translation.)

THE following is the letter read out by Sr. Medeiros Netto:—

Sr. Deputado,

In reply to the question put on the 19th February by the Deputy Accurcio Torres before the table of the National Constituent Assembly regarding the coming to Brazil of various Assyrian families, I have the following statement to make:—

"At the request of the English and Spanish Governments, the Brazilian Government has given its effective consent to the entry of Assyrians, without any burden on the National Treasury, at the rate of 500 families at a time ["vez" (? "mez") 500 families a month] composed entirely of agriculturalists, amounting to a total of 14,000 persons.

"To deal with this question, the League of Nations have appointed a commission under the chairmanship of General Browne, formerly in command of the British colonial forces in Iraq, who has an exhaustive knowledge of the character and habits of the Assyrian people, and is at the present moment in the State of Paraná studying the circumstances in which these families can be settled in lands belonging to the Companhia Terras Norte do Paraná.

"A similar stream of immigration has flowed to the United States of America, where, according to General Browne, the best results have been obtained in Wisconsin and Chicago.

"In the case of Brazil, the movement of immigration will be accomplished without any expenditure by the Federal Government; each batch will only be allowed to embark when the preceding batch has been properly settled; the above-mentioned company is undertaking full responsibility for the support and the repatriation of these immigrants in case the colonisation is a failure; and in addition the League of Nations is furnishing a full guarantee of the aptitude for work and perfect state of health ('perfeito estado sanitario') of the Assyrian immigrants.

"The Assyrians are a Christian people, and by nature agricultural, given above all to the cultivation of rice, tobacco and cereals. Many of them are concerned with the small industries derived from cattle raising, so that they fulfil the requirements essential to the establishment of a colonial nucleus in every way advantageous to the interests of Brazil."

I avail, &c.

CAVALCANTI DE LACERDA.



*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received March 20.)*

(No. 126.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, March 7, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your information, two statements showing the estimated receipts and expenditure of the Iraqi Government for the financial year beginning the 1st April next, in the form in which they have been sent forward by the Council of Ministers for consideration by the Iraqi Parliament, where they are now undergoing examination by the Financial Committee. The statements include, for purposes of comparison, figures of the actual and estimated expenditure under similar headings for the past three years.

2. These estimates were prepared by the late Minister of Finance, Nasrat Beg Al Farsi, and accepted by the Cabinet shortly before it resigned. It is not improbable that the new Minister, Naji Pasha Suwaidi, will seek to introduce amendments in the estimates, but the fact that the Prime Minister, who authorised their presentation, is still in power, will tend to operate against the introduction of any alterations of major importance affecting future financial policy.

3. The estimates reflect the unexceptionable and orthodox principles which the present Government have declared to form the foundation of their financial policy. The relevant paragraph from their published programme, a copy of which accompanied my despatch No. 116 of the 1st March, 1934, is quoted below:—

“To finance the State Administration from normal receipts, and assign extraordinary receipts to the carrying out of major capital works; to establish a permanent cadre for State officials on sound bases, and to see that no expansion in establishments is carried out except in case of unavoidable necessity; to improve and increase the species of natural products, and exert all possible efforts for finding fresh and suitable market for disposal of these products.”

Unless the forces operating against the Government bring about its fall before the present session of Parliament closes, the estimates will probably be accepted substantially in their present form.

4. The figures of estimated revenue and expenditure are as follows:—

	£
Revenue	3,803,700
Expenditure	3,798,657
Surplus	5,043

5. The draft estimates have been prepared in the same form and on the same lines as in preceding years. Revenue collections are expected to exceed those of the current year, and of the past three years. Customs receipts are again expected to show an increase, a hope which is founded upon the actual collections by the Customs Department during the first nine months of the current financial year. Receipts from customs duty comprise 45.9 per cent. of the Treasury income, and the percentage increases slowly every year. Receipts from agricultural produce are taken at the same figure as last year, while the revenue from the animal tax is expected to show an increase, the heavy rainfall this winter having provided an amplitude of grazing, which augurs well for the numerical restoration of the much depleted flocks of the northern liwas. Receipts from taxes on agricultural and natural products and on animals represent 18 per cent. of the Government revenue.

6. Income tax is estimated to bring in ID. 125,000, which is an increase of ID. 5,000 on the estimates of the current year. The recent amendments to the Income Tax Law have widened its scope and increased the number of persons liable to pay tax.

7. The Minister has refrained from following the precedent set in the two preceding years, in which the dead rent payments due from the British Oil Development Company were absorbed into general revenues and no credit is taken for any receipt on this account. The ostensible reason for this is the desire of the Government to adhere strictly to the principle of hypothecating all receipts

from oil royalties for development works of a capital nature, but the Minister may have been influenced by the fact that the amount due from the company on the 1st January, 1934, has not yet been paid and there is some doubt whether it will be. Nothing is included as the Government's share of the profits of the Bagdad Light and Power Company, as against the sum of ID. 6,000 which appeared in the estimates of the current year, owing to the destructive effect of the boycott upon the company's revenues. (See correspondence ending in my despatch No. O.T.A./6 of the 20th February last.) The royalties to be derived from the operations of the Khanaqin Oil Company are assessed at ID. 24,000, as against ID. 20,000 for the current year.

8. The estimates under other revenue heads have undergone minor alterations, of which the only one worthy of special comment is a decrease of ID. 12,500 in the receipts from court fees, consequent upon a long-overdue revision of the scale of fees charged. A more doubtful revenue item is the inclusion of an amount of ID. 12,000, which is expected to be derived from the recovery of the cost of special seed wheat distributed to selected cultivators during 1933. Numerous lengthy lists of debts written off at intervals during the past ten years after similar experiments in encouraging the cultivator by recoverable advances testify to the difficulty which will be encountered in endeavouring to justify this item.

9. The expenditure side of the estimates is lightened by the disappearance of provision for repayment of the Ottoman Public Debt, the last instalment of ID. 64,650 having been paid on the 1st March, 1934. Substantial increases are again budgeted for in the cost of the Defence Forces and the Police, which are to absorb 23 per cent. and 15 per cent. respectively of the total revenues, as compared with a total of 36 per cent. for the current year. The additional expenditure on the army (ID. 54,000) is to be voted in order to provide for the formation of three new frontier battalions, and an expansion of the establishments of existing units and other preliminary measures, to render effective the adoption of the principle of conscription for National Military Service. The strength of the police force is to be still further increased, in order that new posts may be established and stricter measures instituted to combat highway robbery and smuggling.

10. The policy of educational expansion is again reflected in a large increase in the votes of the Ministry of Education, to which 11 per cent. of the total revenues are now diverted. New schools are to be provided, additional teachers engaged, and educational facilities generally are to be extended and improved. The expenditure on this service is now three times as great as it was ten years ago, although the total revenues of the Government have not appreciably altered. Small increases are shown in the amount of funds provided for Health Services, for the establishment of additional dispensaries, and in the votes for the Ministry of Justice for the opening of new courts, and to meet the cost of reorganisation of certain Departments. There are no noteworthy alterations under the other heads of expenditure. The 5 per cent. cut in Government salaries and pensions, introduced as an urgent measure of economy in 1930, is to remain operative throughout the coming financial year.

11. The estimates of revenue appear to have been framed on a reasonably conservative basis, and there should be little difficulty experienced by the Government in maintaining comparative equilibrium between normal revenue and expenditure during the coming year on the lines laid down in the estimates. The latest forecast for the current financial year is that there will be a deficit of approximately ID. 50,000, which is attributed to the heavy unforeseen expenditure (already totalling about ID. 60,000) incurred as a result of the Assyrian troubles. The position at the close of the year is likely to be that the accumulated deficits on the ordinary budgets will amount to ID. 704,000, against which there will remain unspent from the amounts made available for capital works expenditure a sum of approximately ID. 1,066,000. The Government financial position therefore remains essentially sound.

12. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.



## Enclosure in No. 125.

*Iraqi Government Draft Estimates for the Financial Year 1934-35.*

## Summary of Expenditure by Chapter.

Chapter.	Ministries and Departments.	Actual Expenditure 1931.	Actual Expenditure 1932.	Estimates 1933.	Estimates 1934.
		Dinars.	Dinars.	Dinars.	Dinars.
I	Public Debts and Pensions .. ..	293,781	260,229	246,065	165,600
II	Civil List of His Majesty the King ..	58,148	58,392	60,415	58,710
III	Parliament .. ..	54,285	34,954	68,102	43,802
IV	Comptroller and Auditor General ..	8,014	9,172	9,715	9,795
V	Council of Ministers .. ..	17,947	23,363	35,210	12,061
VI	Ministry for Foreign Affairs .. ..	24,570	29,906	43,574	55,486
VII	Ministry of Finance .. ..	246,339	253,190	286,033	280,060
VII-A	Customs and Excise .. ..	164,937	166,770	174,250	178,464
VIII	Ministry of Interior .. ..	269,152	288,214	305,255	299,852
VIII-A	Iraq Police .. ..	548,115	541,759	559,855	554,355
VIII-B	Health Service .. ..	199,161	176,262	199,815	210,045
IX	Ministry of Defence .. ..	745,289	801,442	841,170	880,080
X	Ministry of Justice .. ..	100,402	105,422	120,303	126,796
X-A	Tapu Department .. ..	28,504	28,383	36,100	36,560
XI	Ministry of Education .. ..	282,195	306,994	359,645	399,645
XII	Ministry of Economics and Communica- tions .. ..	51,030	62,680	62,925	62,755
XII-A	Department of Agriculture and Veterinary ..	67,052	56,694	87,092	63,531
XII-B	Public Works Department .. ..	148,639	132,128	116,820	113,000
XII-C	Posts and Telegraphs .. ..	180,925	163,212	165,780	160,990
XII-D	Irrigation Department .. ..	96,050	87,004	90,150	37,070
	Total .. ..	3,575,535	3,586,160	3,868,274	3,798,637

*Iraqi Government Draft Estimates for the Financial Year 1934-35.*

## Summary of Receipts by Chapter.

Chapter.	Particulars.	Actual Receipts 1931.	Actual Receipts 1932.	Estimates 1933.	Estimates 1934.
		Dinars.	Dinars.	Dinars.	Dinars.
I	Taxation on Agricultural and Natural Produce, Animals and Rents of Government Properties .. ..	626,309	655,401	683,000	693,000
II	Property, Income and Stamp Taxes ..	312,316	329,267	332,000	342,850
III	Miscellaneous Revenues .. ..	199,422	324,599	294,335	145,505
IV	Customs and Excise .. ..	1,858,056	1,930,944	2,005,500	2,162,975
V	Posts and Telegraphs .. ..	202,887	205,798	184,000	186,150
VI	Other Government Services and Institutions .. ..	250,833	245,043	266,165	275,220
	Total .. ..	3,449,823	3,691,052	3,765,000	3,803,700

[E 2049/1/93]

No. 126.

*Brigadier-General Browne to President, Committee for the Settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq, Geneva.—(Received in Foreign Office, April 3.)*

Sir,  
Londrina, March 10, 1934.  
IN conformity with your telegram received through the British consul-general at São Paulo on the 9th March, I have the honour to transmit herewith a supplementary report on the proposed settlement of the Assyrians in Paraná.

This report is in two parts, one for publication and the other of a confidential character on points to which it would seem desirable to direct the attention of the Committee for the Settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq.

I have, &c.

J. GILBERT BROWNE,  
Brigadier-General.

## Enclosure 1 in No. 126.

## LEAGUE OF NATIONS: SETTLEMENT OF THE ASSYRIANS OF IRAQ.

*Report by Brigadier-General Browne on the Settlement of Assyrians on the Lands in Paraná of Paraná Plantations (Limited).*

Geneva, March 26, 1934.

## Introduction.

THE Council of the League, at its meeting on the 19th January, 1934, adopted the report of the Committee for the Settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq, dated the 10th January, 1934 (document C.69.1934.VII), concerning proposals made by the Nansen International Office for Refugees for the settlement of those Assyrians who might wish to leave Iraq.

In that report the committee expressed the opinion that it considered it essential to satisfy itself that the lands selected would meet the special needs of the Assyrian population by means of a local investigation carried out by someone with a thorough knowledge of the requirements and peculiarities of the population in question, and decided to entrust me with the task, assisted by M. Charles Redard, counsellor of the Swiss Legation, Rio de Janeiro, and Mr. T. F. Johnson, Secretary-General of the Nansen International Office for Refugees.

The committee requested this commission to proceed to Paraná as soon as possible, and to submit a preliminary report to the committee by telegram, based on the following questionnaire (see Annex I)(\*) :—

General Browne and Mr. Johnson sailed for Brazil on the 27th January, and arrived at Rio de Janeiro on the 12th February, where they were joined by M. Redard.

The commission got into touch immediately with Sir William Seeds, K.C.M.G., the British Ambassador, and with Dr. Vicente Sales, the Spanish Ambassador, who had already assisted the League in its negotiations with the Brazilian Government.

As soon as the holidays connected with the carnival would permit, the commission established contact with the presidency, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the Minister of Labour, and left Rio de Janeiro on the 16th February for Londrina, the headquarters in Paraná of the Paraná Plantations, which it reached on the 19th February.

Accompanied by Mr. Thomas, the director of the company, the commission spent a day on a preliminary inspection of the settlements in the neighbourhood of Londrina. Among others, it had long interviews with German and Japanese settlers, most of whom had begun settlement under financial conditions definitely inferior to those contemplated for the Assyrians. In each case the commission satisfied itself that the settlers had not only succeeded in becoming self-supporting within about eight months of their arrival, but that those who had shown moderate initiative and energy, had achieved a modest degree of prosperity.

The commission arrived at the unanimous conclusion that the Assyrians, given the necessary goodwill, could be satisfactorily settled in the region of Londrina. The next step was for the commission to satisfy itself that the conditions obtaining in the area proposed for the settlement of the Assyrians were,  *grosso modo*, similar to those obtaining in the Londrina region.

The commission therefore proceeded to the proposed area on the 21st February. The first 36 kilom. of the journey were accomplished by motor car,

(\*) Not printed.



over the company's existing road and over a new road in course of construction by the company. The remaining 33 kilom. were covered on mule-back through forest tracks, and involved seven and a quarter hours' actual riding, one night being spent in a temporary forest camp established by the company. In addition, a deviation was made to inspect certain regions in the northern part of the proposed settlement area.

The two next days were spent in the proposed area, and 64 kilom. on mule-back were covered by the commission in various directions over the northern part of the area. This was as much as the existing forest tracks would permit.

Various views were, however, obtained of other parts of the area, and information supplied by the company's survey parties and a local hunter, who stated that he had traversed the whole area, justified the commission in arriving at the reasonable assumption that the whole of the proposed area was, in all respects, similar to the Londrina region. In all, during its first inspection of the proposed Assyrian area, the commission travelled 170 kilom. on mule-back.

On its return to Londrina the commission spent three days in inspecting German, Italian and Polish settlements in New Danzig and Roland, where, in the light of its inspection of the proposed Assyrian area, it was able to confirm its first impression that the company's lands were suitable in all respects for Assyrian settlement.

Equipped with this knowledge, the commission drafted its telegraphic report, which it transmitted from Rio de Janeiro on the 3rd March, with the approval of the British and Spanish Ambassadors. The relevant part of that report was as follows:—

"Commission examined area proposed for Assyrian settlement as thoroughly as time at disposal permitted, traversing distance of 64 kilom. along and within northern part of the area. All ground and conditions seen well fitted for Assyrian settlement, and soil of similar quality to that seen in cultivation in about 2,000 hectares of company's territory. Part of area not seen is virgin forest, and only penetrable with help of parties to cut tracks, who must be paid and two weeks extra required. But information from hunter who has been in area, and according to conclusions drawn by company's survey parties who have been on edge of area as well as from such limited views as commission could obtain, indicated ground to be of similar quality to that already seen."

In conformity with the request of the Assyrian committee, Mr. Johnson is submitting a short preliminary report to the Nansen Office on certain technical and financial aspects of the plan for the settlement of the Assyrians, with particular reference to *Questionnaire No. 2*(<sup>c</sup>), considered by the Assyrian Committee on the 19th January. A copy of that report is annexed.

J. GILBERT BROWNE,  
*Brigadier-General.*

CHS. REDARD.  
T. F. JOHNSON.

*Note by Brigadier-General Browne.*

1. I think the Assyrians should have explained to them that the country they are going to has a climate which does not run to the violent extremes of heat and cold like Iraq. There is a fairly hot summer, and in winter it is often just freezing.

There is plenty of rain in the wet season and no danger of droughts.

The country is well watered, and the water is good and plentiful. There are few inhabitants of the country, and these are quiet and peaceful people, who will keep out of the Assyrians' way at first. Later they may trade with them in a small way.

The land which they go on will have a motor road into it, and very soon the railway will run down to it, so that the land will become more valuable and marketing easy.

There are no plagues in the country, such as the locusts of Iraq.

(<sup>c</sup>) No. 114.

2. The Assyrians should understand that the country they are going to is, in appearance, quite unlike anything they know, being enormous forests of very thick growth.

This requires clearing, and they should not attempt to do this without help and supervision in the first place, because they will only lose very valuable timber trees, which will bring them in money, but also they will be liable to have accidents.

The land, once cleared, is most wonderfully fertile, and will grow anything which the Assyrians are accustomed to grow.

3. The staple food of the Assyrians is rice in Iraq. This is grown there in water, and is one of the worst causes of the breeding of the *Anopheles* mosquito, causing malaria.

Here the rice is grown on dry land, and is of excellent quality, and grows thicker and more luxuriantly than that grown in Iraq.

There may be some difficulty at first in getting the Assyrians to take to maize, rye and manioc, instead of barley and wheat, which they use so much in Iraq. I think it may be necessary at first to purchase barley and wheat for them, and let them attempt to grow the crops to which they are accustomed until they get used to using the other more easily grown food crops.

I see a difficulty about tea, if it cannot be provided, not only because it is their habitual beverage, but especially because they are limited to tea and bread only during their fasts of Advent and Lent. Possibly Yerba Mate tea might be accepted as a substitute if the Mar Shimun will give his orders on this matter.

4. Sheep-raising, which is essentially one of the Assyrian activities, is not so developed here, and probably will not be for some years, *i.e.*, until there are large areas of pasture. On the other hand, the climate is quite fit for sheep.

There are, however, goats, pigs and cattle here, which are a most successful industry. The Assyrians have large flocks of goats in Iraq, and some have a knowledge of cattle. Pig-breeding will be new to them, but they should take to this without difficulty.

5. Paraná Plantations have settled on the area of land for settlers at 5 alquerias per family (1 alqueria = 6 acres). This is based on experience. This will be ample for each Assyrian family at the start. I find that in the settlements already established that most settlers have so far only cleared and cultivated, on an average, about half the area of 5 alquerias allotted to them.

6. I find on going round the settlements that—

(a) A family of settlers averaging five, who really set to work, can be in a position to live on the produce of their land in eight months.

(b) That, on an average, a settler can pay up the money due on his land and become the owner of it in four years. In view of the fact that it is proposed that the Assyrians should be advanced the cost of their initial settlement, which will amount to approximately the same cost as the land, I advise that the period of reimbursement should be extended a further four years. As the Assyrian is keen on owning land for himself, I see no reason why he should fall behind these periods.

These reimbursements might be effected through the intermediary of Mar Shimun and the village leaders. Administration of the settlements could also be effected in the same manner.

7. The Assyrians are accustomed to medical attention, especially the large number who have served in the levies, and for their dependants. Others would come to the Government district medical officers, or, where levy camps were established, or levy columns were moving, many of the civilian population would come in for advice and treatment from the levy medical officers.

There will be a medical centre established in the colony to which the settlers can go, and it should reassure the Assyrians that they will get medical treatment close at hand in the place they are going to.

8. The Assyrians should have it thoroughly explained to them that there will be no interference with their religion, especially since they are Christians. I found some of the ill-informed criticism was that they were Moslems, and I have endeavoured to remove this idea in interviews and in other ways.

9. It will be most necessary for the Assyrian schools to start classes for learning Portuguese. This will be absolutely indispensable, and I strongly advise



that their school-teachers take in hand learning the language now in order to lose no time. This should present no difficulty to people who have in the past mastered up to five languages.

10. Irrigation for crops and the making of mill streams for working crushing machinery is essential, and the streams give every facility for so doing. The Assyrians are expert at this kind of work.

11. There is no malaria in the area where it is proposed to put the Assyrians, nor is the Anopheles mosquito there. Therefore, in about four years all who have the germ should lose it.

12. Finally, this whole area is not only capable of development, but is rapidly developing, and it seems to me that the Assyrians, with the qualities they have, will fit in with and help extensively in the development of this country.

J. GILBERT BROWNE, *Brigadier-General*.

*Preliminary report by T. F. Johnson, Secretary-General of the Nansen Office for Refugees, on the Financial and Technical Aspects of the proposals for the Settlement of two Groups of 10,000 and 5,000 Assyrians on the lands of Paraná Plantations (Limited), in North Paraná.*

### I.—Introduction.

In compliance with the request made by the Assyrian Committee for the Settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq, at its meeting on the 19th January, I have the honour to submit a preliminary report on certain financial and technical aspects of the proposals for the settlement of two groups of 10,000 and 5,000 Assyrians on the lands of Paraná Plantations (Limited) in North Paraná.

A similar report on alternative proposals for the settlement of the 5,000 Assyrians on lands owned by the company in the State of São Paulo will be submitted after the inspection of those lands.

This report is based in general on the preliminary offer made by the company and contained in document P.8.1933 (a); the revised offers contained in my record of conversations with General Asquith, of the 9th November, 1933, and in his letter of the 13th November (document C. Min. Ass. 13), and in his subsequent letter of the 30th November (document C. Min. Ass. 14). Detailed comments on the various statements contained in those documents concerning the general conditions obtaining in the company's properties will be made in my main report, but for the purposes of this preliminary report it may be assumed that the statements in question have been found to be substantially accurate. It might perhaps be mentioned in this connexion, however, that during several days spent in North Paraná, at a time usually regarded as the hottest period of the year, a higher temperature than 32 degrees centigrade was not experienced. On the other hand, the statement made in document P.8.1933 (a) concerning the complete absence of malaria in the company's territory now requires modification in view of the recent appearance of four cases of this illness. Otherwise the population of the area appears to be singularly free from serious infectious diseases and the general health good.

### II.—Possibilities of Successful Settlement.

Detailed investigation of the experiences of Austrian, German, Japanese and Polish settlers, whose periods of occupation of their lands in North Paraná varied from eight months to three years, points to the conclusion that, given even a moderate display of goodwill, initiative and energy, the Assyrians should become successful settlers in North Paraná; should reach the self-supporting stage well within the period of nine months contemplated for their support; be able to repay the advances made for their settlement within eight years; and repay the expenses of their transport within a period of a further four years. The fact that settlers without previous agricultural experience, and notably two German brothers of 21 and 20 years of age, one a sailor and the other a bank clerk, have become self-supporting within nine months under financial conditions certainly not superior to those contemplated for the Assyrians, justifies the expectation that even the able-bodied non-agricultural Assyrians should become successful settlers under the proposed settlement scheme. To ensure, however, the successful settlement of

the able-bodied non-agricultural categories, and to meet the stipulation concerning their reception made by the Brazilian Government, it would be a wise precaution to arrange that such Assyrians should serve a reasonable apprenticeship with Assyrian agricultural families in Paraná before they are definitely allotted their own lands.

As regards the prospects of the Assyrians once they have become self-supporting, enquiries regarding marketing possibilities at São Paulo, the nearest large population centre, indicate that, after taking into consideration freight charges, their surplus produce should provide them with more than sufficient funds not only to repay the advances made to them, but leave a margin for their economic development.

### III.—Finance and Administration.

(a) *General*.—There are three alternative methods of administering the settlement scheme:—

- (1) By means of a contract with the company for the lump sum of £194,000 (or £204,078) mentioned in the company's revised offer (document C. Min. Ass. 13).
- (2) By purchase of the necessary land from the company for £65,000, and the company acting as the agents of the Nansen Office for the settlement work (see alternative offer made by General Asquith in the same document).
- (3) By the Nansen Office on the lines it has adopted for the settlement of the Armenian refugees in Syria.

The following observations are offered on the advantages and disadvantages of the foregoing alternatives:—

- (1) If the Nansen Office makes a contract with the company for the whole settlement work for a lump sum, it limits its financial liability unless actual expenditure exceeds the contracted sum by 10 per cent., in which case the surplus would have to be borne equally by the company and the office. On the other hand, any saving would be similarly divided. Such an arrangement would possess certain manifest disadvantages, not the least being the inability of the company, through *force majeure*, to execute its contract. In addition, difficulties might arise through differences of opinion concerning the interpretation of the contract. At the best, the Nansen Office, whilst shouldering the moral responsibility for the successful settlement of the Assyrians, would only have a representative in Paraná in little more than a consultative capacity.
- (2) The main advantages of this arrangement are that the Nansen Office would be able to benefit from the organisation and experience of the company, whilst maintaining the effective administrative and financial direction of the settlement work.<sup>(\*)</sup> Such an arrangement might, however, result in failure to secure economies on the remission of import duties and on the employment of a certain number of Assyrians in minor posts.
- (3) If it is desired that the Nansen Office should assume full responsibility for the successful execution of the settlement plan, it would be necessary to contemplate an arrangement similar to that in force in Syria for the settlement of some 30,000 Armenian refugees, which would enable the major portion of the administrative expenses, other than those of the commissioner, to be utilised for the employment of Assyrians. A somewhat similar system is at present in successful operation, on a small scale, in the German colony, Roland (near Londrina), which enjoys the active assistance and co-operation of the company's administration. Another probable advantage would be the eventual exemption from taxation and import duties usually accorded to League organisations. The possible disadvantage of the application of this system to the settlement of the Assyrians might be that those employed by the Nansen Office might claim to be treated on the same basis as other League officials, but this difficulty could be overcome by the insertion of a specific clause to the contrary in their contracts.

(\*) This direction could probably be arranged by the appointment of a commissioner of the Nansen Office, assisted by an auditor and a small staff of one or two typists.



IV.—*Eventual Economies.*

After a detailed examination with the local director of the company of the various items of expenditure contained in the company's revised offer, it would seem possible to effect the following economies:—

	Economy. £
1. <i>Administration.</i>	
If the commissioner appointed by the Nansen Office has the necessary qualifications to direct the settlement work, the director mentioned in the company's offer could be dispensed with ... ..	1,500
2. <i>Housing Accommodation, &amp;c.</i>	
Company's estimates ... ..	£2,000
Revised estimates—	
Passages ... ..	£300
Accommodation ... ..	500
Contingencies ... ..	200
	1,000
3. 125 <i>Instructional Labourers</i> , reduced by ... ..	1,000
4. <i>Food.</i> —The local director considers £65,000 amply sufficient, seeing that settlers can produce some of their own food after four months ... ..	15,000
5. <i>Lorries, &amp;c.</i> , if duty free, £3,000 ... ..	1,000
6. <i>Clearing</i> , £2 per family ... ..	1,000
<i>Increase.</i>	20,500
7. <i>Medical Services.</i> —The local director considers that £3,000 would be required for the first year and £1,000 for the second year ... ..	1,000
Net eventual economy ... ..	19,500

V.—*Transport, Reception Arrangements, &c.*

The company will, with two months' notice, be able to receive 800 Assyrians per fortnight, and draft them straight on to their holdings, with only two or three days in reception or concentration camps.

I would suggest that each Assyrian be required to sign a declaration to the effect that he leaves Iraq for Paraná of his own free will, that he agrees to repay the Nansen Office the sum advanced for settlement and (?) transport, and that he authorises the Nansen Office to market his produce for the purpose. The scheme for the settlement of the Armenian refugees in Syria offers a precedent for the latter proposal, and the repatriation of Russian refugees to Russia is cited as a precedent for the "free-will declaration."

*Separate Settlement of 5,000 Assyrians.*

I will submit estimates for the separate settlement of 5,000 Assyrians in Paraná and/or São Paulo after inspection of the company's territory in the latter State.

T. F. JOHNSON.

São Paulo, March 16, 1934.

Enclosure 2 in No. 126.

*Note by Brigadier-General Browne respecting Settlement of Assyrians in Paraná.*

(Confidential.)

I CONSIDER that Mar Shimun should go across with the first party. Also that he should be allowed by the Iraqi Government to go to the starting-point, and actually get into the first lorry and go with his people. It will not be good enough for him to start from Cyprus and meet them, as they will be very suspicious.

2. As regards the two parties of Assyrians, I believe this will cease when they leave Iraq. It is to a great extent artificial, and really consists of a cleavage between those who agree to fall in with the Government plans of settlement and those who do not. If the difficulties continue up to the time of settlement, I believe that they will disappear out here, so that, if they are settled within reasonable distance of each other, the people will become united. For this reason the commission have selected another possible area close to the first one selected by Paraná Plantations, and are investigating it.

*Status of the Assyrians.*

3. This is a matter we are continually asked about in interviewing Brazilian officials. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sr. Cavalcanti de Lacerda, was particularly strong on it.

I stressed this point very strongly in my letter of the 3rd March to the Secretary-General of the League.

4. The press campaign against the Assyrian settlement is continued by the society called "The Friends of Alberto Torres," and certainly has an effect on the political atmosphere, and is going to make difficulties in the settlement of the Assyrians.

I have already drawn attention to this matter in my letter of the 3rd March.

5. I have seen document C/Min. Ass./13 of the 18th November, 1933, that mention is made of sending specially selected single men of robust type on to the area of settlement. If this means separating a man from his family, I advise very strongly against doing so, as things are now in Iraq. The man will object strongly to leaving the family, and it is quite likely will refuse to do so; nor will the family let him go.

J. GILBERT BROWNE,  
*Brigadier-General.*

[E 2051/4/93]

No. 127.

*United Kingdom Delegate to Foreign Office.—(Received April 3.)*

(No. 26.)

THE United Kingdom delegate to the League of Nations presents his compliments, and has the honour to transmit copy of a note of the 18th meeting of the Assyrian Committee of Council, on the 26th March, 1934, of which a copy has been sent to His Majesty's Ambassador, Bagdad.

*United Kingdom Delegation, Geneva,  
March 31, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 127.

ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

*Record of the 18th Meeting of the Council Committee held on March 26,  
at 10.30 A.M.*

THE President assumed that the members of the committee had read the correspondence which had passed between himself and Brigadier Browne since the last meeting of the committee. When he heard that Brigadier Browne had contemplated leaving Brazil on the 25th March and was only putting off his departure in the expectation of receiving further instructions, he had telegraphed



confidentially to the Spanish Ambassador to find out whether the latter considered that the continued presence of the mission in Brazil after the 25th March would be useful or not. He had received a reply to the effect that the mission proposed to leave on the 1st April, unless the Brazilian Minister of Labour asked them to stay longer, and the reply had added that the Spanish and British Ambassadors considered that the mission should leave on that date and that the prolongation of its stay in Brazil was useless, as the political situation rendered the arrival of the Assyrians for the moment impossible. (The text of this telegram is attached as Annex A.) Since then a further telegram had been received from Brigadier Browne (see Annex B) stating that the mission proposed to leave on the 7th April, and asking the President to telegraph if this was agreed. It was, therefore, necessary for the committee in the first place to consider the instructions which should be sent to Brigadier Browne, and, in the second place, to examine the situation in general, which did not appear favourable. The President understood, however, that the United Kingdom representative had a certain amount of information on the situation in Brazil, which he was prepared to give to the committee.

At this point it was announced that Brigadier Browne's report had arrived, but that, owing to the necessity of translation and copying, it was unlikely to be ready before the evening.

*The United Kingdom Representative* pointed out that politically Brazil was passing through a somewhat difficult phase. The Government was still a provisional one, and the chief of the Government was Acting President only. The Constituent Assembly was busily considering a new Constitution and an early presidential election had been spoken of. At a time when the Government was thus on the verge of a return to constitutional procedure, it was naturally compelled to pay increasing attention to popular feeling. Unfortunately, a good deal of the feeling expressed appeared to be ultra-nationalist and anti-foreign in tone. It was directed against foreign enterprises in general. It was this feeling which the Assyrian immigration scheme had unfortunately encountered. It appeared, however, to be not so much the case that the Assyrian scheme had of itself aroused special opposition, but that the question of the Assyrian immigration had come to the fore at a particularly unfortunate moment when any foreign scheme was suspect. Moreover, in the matter of immigration the Brazilians had had one or two unfortunate experiences; of mutinous Polish colonists, for instance, and of Hungarians who flatly refused to remain on the land and insisted on streaming into the towns and clamouring for reshipment home. When one added to this the ignorance which inevitably existed in Brazil as to what the Assyrians were and the persistent tendency to confuse them with so-called "Syrians," who were mostly small traders and usurers and correspondingly unpopular, the agitation which had sprung up was scarcely surprising.

With this preface, the United Kingdom representative summarised a number of reports received from His Majesty's Ambassador in Rio since the last meeting of the committee. He gave examples of the press campaign which had been carried on against Assyrian immigration, and read to the committee the substance of a tranquillising communiqué which the Brazilian Government had issued in the form of a press interview with the Minister of Labour on the 5th February. Unfortunately, this communiqué appeared to have a temporary effect, the agitation had since been renewed, and was led by a so-called "learned society" named "The Friends of Alberto Torres," which was strongly Nationalist and apparently not very well informed. One of its members, for instance, spoke of the Assyrians as "Bedouins." This society had published a manifesto calling on students to organise a movement against Assyrian immigration, and describing the scheme as "an imperialist imposition on Brazil." Immigration was about the same time a good deal discussed in the Constituent Assembly, where the Assyrians themselves had been the subject of unfavourable comment. It was in this atmosphere that Brigadier Browne's mission had arrived in Brazil.

The United Kingdom representative then read out a statement made by the Brazilian Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 21st February in reply to an interpellation in the Constituent Assembly. (A translation of the statement is attached as Annex C.) He pointed out that the statement was not very

(<sup>c</sup>) Not printed.

accurate, but it showed at least that the Brazilian Government had then no intention of giving up the scheme, and the last paragraph was interesting as showing that they did not contemplate too strict an interpretation of the condition that all the Assyrians should be agriculturalists. This paragraph was, in fact, based on a memorandum which Brigadier Browne had prepared and given to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, explaining that the Assyrians were not all agriculturalists, but that most of them who were not followed callings which would be useful in developing the proposed colony without interfering with the labour market in Brazil.

The position seemed to have changed for the worse at the beginning of March. On the 2nd March His Majesty's Ambassador had reported that Brigadier Browne's mission had returned that day to Rio, but that the chief of the Government had, on a plea of pressure of work, refused to grant the mission an audience which had been previously contemplated. The Ambassador added that there was reason to fear that the anti-Assyrian campaign which was being pursued in the Constituent Assembly was having its effect. The Spanish Ambassador had received no official hint, but both he and His Majesty's Ambassador were inclined to think that an attempt might eventually be made by the Government to withdraw their previous consent or to postpone the immigration. It was possible that the Government would be in a stronger position when the President was definitely elected, but both Ambassadors were of opinion that for a while it would not do to hurry matters. Meanwhile, they felt that the continued presence of Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson as experts might be useful. Since then there had been further correspondence between the President of the Council Committee and Brigadier Browne and the Spanish Ambassador regarding the date of the departure of the mission, ending with the telegram from the Spanish Ambassador of the 21st March which the President had just read out. It was possible that circumstances had changed since that telegram was despatched, for the United Kingdom representative had since derived the impression that His Majesty's Ambassador was in favour of Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson remaining in Rio in the capacity of experts, in the event of further negotiations with the Brazilian Government. It was possible that, when the telegram of the 21st March was despatched, the Ambassadors did not perhaps realise that detailed negotiations with the Brazilian Government might be necessary in the near future in Rio. Moreover, in a telegram of the 22nd March, His Majesty's Ambassador had reported that the "Society of the Friends of Alberto Torres" had had an audience with the chief of the Government, who had, in consequence, appointed a special Commission of Enquiry into the allegations that the Assyrians were unsuitable colonists.

Whether this move was designed to cover a retreat by the Brazilian Government from the consent which they had already given, or whether it was merely to give time for the agitation to die down was a matter for conjecture. But, coupled with the fact that the Brazilian Government were understood to have given instructions to a representative in Europe to examine the Assyrian question on behalf of the Ministry of Labour, there was at least ground for supposing that the Brazilian Government meant to adhere to their attitude, provided that they could demonstrate to the opposition in Brazil that the objections to receiving the Assyrians were ill-founded.

*The President* thanked the United Kingdom representative for this information. He then said that the first question to be decided was whether Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson should leave Brazil. The latest information which the United Kingdom representative had read out was rather contrary to the telegram of the 21st March from the Spanish Ambassador. He himself was pessimistic about prospects in Brazil, and was inclined to doubt whether the continued presence of the mission served any useful purpose. On the other hand, if further negotiations took place with the Brazilian Government, necessary information might be lacking if Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson had been previously withdrawn, and he would like the opinion of members of the committee as to whether the two experts should return on the 7th April or not.

*The United Kingdom Representative* thought that the answer depended on the procedure which the committee now proposed to adopt. In a telegram addressed to the Brazilian Government on the 16th January the President had



foreshadowed that the conditions laid down by the Brazilian Government would be fully examined when Brigadier Browne's report had been received. In addition, it was necessary, in order that full information regarding the scheme might be put before the Assyrians, to obtain authoritative statements in some form or other from the Brazilian Government regarding the treatment which the Assyrians would receive eventually in Brazil in various matters. No progress could, therefore, be made without negotiations with the Brazilian Government on these two points. Brazil seemed the proper place for the negotiations, and the presence of Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson might well be necessary in the capacity of experts.

*The President* said that two kinds of negotiations might be necessary. The first would be simply designed to find out whether the Brazilian Government wished to proceed with the scheme or not. The second kind would concern details regarding the settlement and future status of the Assyrians. He very much doubted the advisability of commencing at present this second kind of negotiation, which was the only one which would necessitate the continued presence of Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson. It seemed very doubtful to him whether it was wise to press the Brazilian Government for the moment. It might be better to let matters take their course. On the other hand, the Commission of Enquiry which the Brazilian Government had set up might present arguments against immigration which with the help of experts the two Ambassadors might possibly combat. For that purpose it might be useful for Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson to stay for a while. But the President repeated that he did not think it was of any use to press the Brazilian Government further, and he wondered whether the continued stay of the two experts was possible from the financial point of view.

*Mr. Walters* said that the credit for 20,000 fr. would certainly be exhausted if the mission stayed in Brazil until the 7th April. It was, of course, possible to obtain a further credit. It would be necessary to obtain the President's consent. This could no doubt be obtained, though naturally the League was strongly in favour of economy if possible.

*The Danish Representative*, while agreeing that economy was very important, said that it was also extremely important to obtain a quick solution of the Assyrian question. He thought that it would be useful to the commission to have further information regarding the situation in Brazil. It might be that the present outcry against Assyrian immigration was not a serious issue at all. He recalled a previous case in Brazil, where the question of the right of inspectors to enter private houses in an anti-malaria campaign had been the subject of great agitation in connexion with an election. Once the election was over, the issue was completely forgotten. It was possible that it might be the same with the Assyrian agitation. He asked whether information was available as to when the presidential election might be expected to take place and how long the newly-appointed Commission of Enquiry was likely to sit.

*The United Kingdom Representative* regretted that he was not able to give any information on these points. He only knew that the political situation in Brazil was uncertain, and doubted whether anyone could say at present when the presidential election was likely to be held. As to the Commission of Enquiry, his only information was that it had been appointed, apparently on or about the 22nd March.

*The President* said that, during the time they had spent in Brazil, the members of the mission had time to give ample information to the Spanish and British Ambassadors on points of detail, and he could not believe that their continued presence was really a necessity. The situation in Brazil was more and more difficult, and he did not see how any progress could be made. He suggested that the committee should decide that the mission should return from Brazil on the 7th April. He suggested that it might be advisable for the committee then to consider the situation privately as though not merely the Brazilian project had broken down, but that all alternative schemes had broken down also. The committee might go on hoping that the Brazilian scheme could still be saved or that some alternative destination might be found, but he himself was not hopeful on either point, and it seemed to him that the committee should lose no time in

considering the possibility of the Assyrians having to remain, after all, in Iraq. He considered it most urgent that the committee should consider the question as though they had met with a definite check. That would not mean that the Brazilian scheme would necessarily be dropped. The Ambassadors in Rio could be left to do what was possible, but his feeling was that at present the eventual resettlement in Iraq of the Assyrians was more important than a further detailed study of the Brazilian project. He proposed, therefore, that a telegram should be sent to Rio agreeing to the return of the mission on the 7th April, and asking the Ambassadors to continue to do what was possible; and that the committee should then turn to the consideration of the question of the ultimate settlement of the Assyrians in Iraq.

*The Danish Representative* doubted whether it was wise to let the mission leave. There was insufficient information about the Commission of Enquiry which the Brazilian Government had set up. If that commission had a free hand and could be purely objective in its work, it might be advisable to let Brigadier Browne leave, but if there were a political element in the commission any question might be raised. Brigadier Browne was the only authority in Brazil on the subject of the Assyrians. As soon as he had left, the Ambassadors would have to rely not on his authoritative statements, but on their own influence. It was possible that Major Johnson might be spared from Brazil, but the Danish representative thought it dangerous to allow Brigadier Browne to leave. As to the question of expense, he confessed himself unmoved by this consideration. The object was to get a solution of the question.

*The President* thought that the influence which the Ambassadors could exercise would be more effective than any authoritative statement by Brigadier Browne. No information was available about the length of time which the Commission of Enquiry might take, and, if Brigadier Browne's movements depended on that commission, he might remain in Brazil indefinitely.

*The French Representative* suggested that the Spanish Ambassador should be asked for an appreciation of the situation. He might be asked how long the Commission of Enquiry was likely to last, and whether the presence of Brigadier Browne would help, and, while the financial difficulty could be emphasised, the decision might be left to the discretion of the Ambassador.

*The President* again read the Spanish Ambassador's telegram of the 21st March. The latest information of the United Kingdom representative was perhaps a little different, but there appeared to be nothing to suggest that the situation was not as serious as when the Spanish Ambassador had telegraphed. The President was most pessimistic about the appointment of the commission. He thought that it could only bear one explanation, namely, that the Brazilian Government were going to use its findings to go back on the consent already given.

*The Danish Representative* did not agree with this. He thought it was equally possible that the Brazilian Government had appointed the commission to help in carrying through their decision. It would surely be difficult for the Brazilian Government to go back on their attitude, simply on the report of a Brazilian Commission, against the authority of the League and its experts.

*The Italian and Mexican Representatives* expressed their agreement with the President. The question was a political one. The experts must by now have given all the necessary technical material to the Ambassadors, to whom future action could be left. They saw no useful purpose in retaining Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson.

*The United Kingdom Representative* regretted that so much pessimism and discouragement should have been expressed. He recalled that, when the task of settling the Assyrians was first entrusted to the Council Committee in October last, there were people in Geneva who had stated that it would be a three-year business, and there was some reason to believe that they might be right. After all, the committee had the whole world to search and had no organisation ready to hand. If, after some five months only, a ready-made scheme which it had had the good fortune to find in the archives of the Nansen Office were to fail, it would be regrettable, but there was no reason to despair. He did not think that the committee was justified in supposing that it must now consider the possibility of



the Assyrians remaining permanently in Iraq. Indeed, to do so was rather outside its competence. The one task of the committee was to examine the practicability of settling the Assyrians outside Iraq. It was true that it was empowered eventually to consider the resettlement in Iraq of those Assyrians who wished to remain there, but this was quite a different matter from considering the wholesale resettlement of the Assyrians in Iraq on the ground that no home elsewhere could be found for them. The committee was bound to exhaust all possibilities of settlement outside Iraq, and, if it failed to find a suitable home for the Assyrians, its only course was to report the fact to the Council, who would then have to consider what further action was necessary. Even if the Brazilian scheme broke down, it was much too early to say that there was no alternative. In point of fact the committee had not yet made a real effort to find an alternative. It had been unnecessary to do so. They had simply made tentative enquiries of various countries. Replies were still awaited from some of these countries, e.g., Canada, the Argentine and South Africa, and if the Brazilian scheme broke down the committee would have to make a more determined effort to find a destination elsewhere. He was not convinced that one could not be found. Meanwhile, however, the Brazilian scheme could not be left indefinitely in a state of uncertainty. If it broke down, it broke down; but at least the committee was bound to clear up the position. It seemed little use simply to allow matters to take their course. The Brazilian Government must be brought into the open. The question was urgent, and the United Kingdom representative consequently made the definite proposal that the committee should forthwith instruct the Spanish Ambassador in Rio to communicate to the Brazilian Government Brigadier Browne's report, and to offer on the basis of it to begin negotiations at once for the settlement of outstanding points. This would at least show whether the Brazilian Government wished to proceed with the scheme or not. At present he saw no reason to suppose that they wished to draw back. The Spanish Ambassador and His Majesty's Ambassador had apparently feared at one point that they might do so, but nothing had yet happened to prove that this fear was well-founded.

The President said that he would like to share the optimistic view of the United Kingdom representative, but the facts were against it. All countries, other than Brazil, which the committee had tried, had been unfavourable. He did not wish to set aside the Brazilian scheme or any alternative, but he thought it was necessary for the committee to take some thought, in the meanwhile, of the situation of the Assyrians in Iraq. As regards the proposed *démarche* in Brazil, he still thought that it was useless to enter into details with the Brazilian Government at present. The committee could, however, ask the Ambassadors for information regarding the Commission of Enquiry which the Brazilian Government had set up, and also invite their opinion on the question whether Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson should remain in Brazil. The President repeated that he regretted to have to take a pessimistic view of the situation, but he thought this view was in accordance with the facts. The Spanish Ambassador had definitely reported that progress was impossible.

The United Kingdom Representative said that the difference between the view of himself and the President was perhaps not as great as it appeared. He himself was anxious that, if it were still possible, negotiations should be started with the Brazilian Government forthwith, but the question whether further progress was really feasible could, of course, only be decided by those in touch with Brazilian opinion. He agreed, therefore, that considerable discretion should be allowed to the Spanish Ambassador, and that he should be asked whether the continued presence of Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson would, in his view, be useful. But the United Kingdom representative thought that the committee ought, in putting this question to the Spanish Ambassador, to explain to him fully what procedure would normally now be adopted. It should be pointed out to him that negotiations were necessary on certain points, and, in deciding whether Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson should remain, he should be asked to take into account the possibility of such negotiations in the near future, and also the assistance which Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson might afford in connexion with the Commission of Enquiry set up by the Brazilian Government. As regards the situation of the Assyrians in Iraq he quite agreed that, if there were to be much delay, the committee must certainly concern itself with this question. But he had understood the President to refer previously not merely to the safety and

well-being of the Assyrians pending emigration, but to their permanent establishment in Iraq. The latter question was outside the committee's competence; the former question was certainly within it.

The Danish Representative agreed that, according to its terms of reference, the committee was bound to supervise the safety of the Assyrians pending emigration, but not to consider their permanent settlement in Iraq, except in the case of those who elected of their own free will to stay there.

The President said that he had raised this question of the safety of the Assyrians because Major Thomson was now available in Geneva and was about to leave for Iraq.

There was agreement that on the following day a meeting should be called, to which the Iraqi representative and Major Thomson would be invited. At this meeting it would be explained that, owing to the difficult situation in Brazil, there was likely to be some delay before any immigration scheme could be put into effect, and that the committee would be glad to be assured that in the meantime every effort would be made by the Iraqi Government to prevent further trouble breaking out.

It was also agreed that a telegram to the Spanish Ambassador should be drafted by the President and the United Kingdom representative, for consideration at a meeting later in the day, explaining to the Ambassador that normally the next step would be negotiations with the Brazilian Government, and asking whether he thought such negotiations feasible and whether, in view of their possibility, he wished Brigadier Browne at least, if not Major Johnson also, to stay for the time being in Brazil.

J. C. STERNDAL BENNETT.

Geneva, March 26, 1934.

#### Annex A to Enclosure.

*Télégramme de l'Ambassadeur d'Espagne à Rio de Janeiro à M. López Oliván.—*  
(Reçu au Secrétariat le 21 mars 1934.)

LA commission reviendra prochainement de l'intérieur du pays et pense partir pour Genève le 1<sup>er</sup> avril, à moins que le Ministre du Travail ne lui demande de rester plus longtemps, étant donné que sa situation est devenue difficile pour avoir voulu nous être favorable.

L'Ambassadeur de Grande-Bretagne et moi sommes d'avis qu'elle parte, la prolongation de son séjour ici serait inutile, puisque la politique intérieure de ce pays annule nos efforts et rend impossible, pour le moment, l'arrivée des Assyriens.

#### Annex B to Enclosure.

*Copy of Telegram from Brigadier Browne, São Paulo, March 23, 1934.*

(Confidential.)

COMMISSION has completed examination of all areas of Paraná Plantations suitable for Assyrian settlement, and, after careful consideration of all points, recommends that, failing settlement of all Assyrians in one block, the two settlement areas should be in Londrina region separated by 18 kilom. of virgin forest, thus effecting economical fixture compared with separate settlement of São Paulo State, facilitating administration and avoiding additional political complications. Commission now writing full report, and will be prepared to leave Brazil with report on 7th April. Please telegraph if agreed.



[E 2052/1/93]

No. 128.

*United Kingdom Delegate to Foreign Office.—(Received April 3.)*

(No. 27.)

THE United Kingdom delegate to the League of Nations presents his compliments, and has the honour to transmit copy of a note of the 19th meeting of the Assyrian Committee of Council, on the 26th March, 1934, of which a copy has been sent to His Majesty's Ambassador, Bagdad.

*United Kingdom Delegation, Geneva,  
March 31, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 128.

## ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

*Record of the 19th Meeting of the Council Committee, held on March 26, 1934,  
at 5 P.M.*

THE committee had before it a draft telegram to the Spanish Ambassador in Rio, which had been prepared by the President and the United Kingdom representative on the basis of the discussion at the previous meeting. The telegram was eventually approved in the form attached as Annex.

Brigadier Browne's report of the 10th March was then circulated. *The President* asked whether the committee wished to consider it in detail at this stage, or whether they would prefer to study it at leisure and discuss it later.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that a point to be borne in mind was that Brigadier Browne had asked by telegram for instructions as to whether the committee thought that further investigations were required in the Paraná area. If there was a question of the mission returning from Brazil on the 7th April, a decision on this point was somewhat urgent.

*The President* agreed that this point would have to be considered, but thought it was perhaps premature to consider it at the moment in view of the telegram which was being sent to the Spanish Ambassador. It would be of little use for the committee to instruct Brigadier Browne to make further investigations in Paraná, if shortly afterwards the Spanish Ambassador reported that further progress with the Brazilian scheme was politically impossible.

*The United Kingdom Representative* agreed, but observed that, on the other hand, if, as seemed probable, the committee was in a position to decide that no further investigations were necessary, there was no reason why Brigadier Browne should not be informed accordingly without delay.

*The President* said that, apart from this point, it would be necessary to examine the report and see whether the enquiry as a whole had been sufficiently exhaustive, or whether any further general information was required which the mission would be in a position to obtain before leaving Brazil. He noted, however, that a still further and presumably more complete report was already being prepared by the mission. He thought that the most useful course would be to examine the present report in detail in the presence of the President of the Nansen Office.

It was agreed that the report should be communicated to M. Werner, with a request that he would communicate any observations, and, if necessary, attend a meeting of the committee for the purpose.

*The French Representative* recalled that in a telegram of the 17th February to the president of the committee, Brigadier Browne had raised the question of the national status of the Assyrians, and his present report showed that this was constantly in the mind of the Brazilian Government. He wondered whether something on this point ought not to be said to Brigadier Browne, and suggested that a reference to the question might even be inserted in the telegram which had been approved to the Spanish Ambassador.

*The United Kingdom Representative* explained that reference to this and other questions which would have to be taken up eventually with the Brazilian Government if negotiations were opened had originally been made in the draft of the telegram now approved. These details had, however, been cut out in the interests of economy, more particularly in view of the fact that His Majesty's Embassy in Rio was now in possession of details regarding the present status of the Assyrians which were not available when Brigadier Browne first raised the question.

*The United Kingdom Representative* then explained the present position. Although exact statistics were probably not available, as the question of nationality had not hitherto arisen in an acute form, it appeared from information available that probably only a minority of the Assyrians in Iraq were technically Iraqi nationals. Those Assyrians with whom the committee was concerned were ex-Ottoman subjects, but it was a fair assumption that they had lost their Turkish nationality in virtue of the Treaty of Lausanne. At all events, it was certain that the Turkish Government would not at this stage recognise them as Turkish nationals. It might be supposed that the Assyrians had automatically acquired Iraqi nationality in view of the provisions of the Iraqi Nationality Law, since all ex-Ottoman subjects habitually resident in Iraq on the 6th August, 1924, were deemed to be Iraqi nationals in virtue of that law. It so happened, however, that most of the Assyrians were not "habitually resident" in Iraq on that date within the meaning of the law, since a large number had returned to Hakkari between 1921 and 1924, and it was only in September 1924 that they were once more expelled by the Turks, and that the problem of the Assyrians was created once more in Iraq.

*The United Kingdom Representative* was not in a position to say what view the Iraqi Government would take of the matter, but he thought he ought to warn the committee that the Iraqi Government might be within their rights in refusing to recognise a very large proportion of the Assyrians as Iraqi nationals. Out of 20,000 Assyrians it was possible that not more than 8,000 were actually Iraqis, and even this number might be an exaggeration. Moreover, the people who were not Iraqis were the very ones who had never wished to settle down in Iraq, and who had been mainly responsible for the request to the League to find a home elsewhere. The committee might therefore assume that the majority of the Assyrians for whom they had to provide would probably be Stateless. The position was that they were already refugees in Iraq, and it was simply a problem not of expatriating them, but of transferring them as refugees from one country to another.

*The President* said that the information supplied by the United Kingdom representative vitally affected the question of the responsibility for the repatriation or resettlement of the Assyrians if they went to Brazil and did not settle down there. The Iraqi Government would, of course, be bound to receive back, if necessary, those of the Assyrians who were genuinely Iraqi nationals, but obviously might raise difficulties about the rest.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that His Majesty's Government had considered this problem with some anxiety, and had come to the conclusion that the best solution would be to arrange, if possible, for the Assyrians who left Iraq to acquire Brazilian nationality at the earliest possible moment, and, preferably, immediately on arrival in Brazil. It was quite clear that in whatever country to which the Assyrians might go they must eventually accept assimilation. They could not hope to go to any modern State and retain indefinitely a separate national existence. His Majesty's Government thought that the best solution to work for was that the Assyrians should lose Iraqi nationality, so far as they now possessed it, and acquire Brazilian nationality immediately on arrival in Brazil. No doubt this would need careful handling, and there would be objections and difficulties, but His Majesty's Government felt that it would be in the long run the simplest and most satisfactory course. If the Assyrians went to Brazil under any misapprehension about their national status there was bound to be trouble later. It would be to the advantage of the Brazilian Government, on the other hand, that the position should be cleared up. It would probably be an administrative convenience to them, and the risk would be diminished of the Assyrians trying to maintain a separate national existence.



*The President* said that, while the proposed solution might have much to recommend it, he was very doubtful himself of the possibility of applying it. It seemed to him to cut entirely across the principle of the free choice of the individual. The committee had hitherto insisted that the emigration of the Assyrians from Iraq must be voluntary, and he thought it was not only the question of leaving Iraq which must be voluntary, but also the question of nationality.

*The French Representative* suggested that the difficulty could be got over by indicating to the Assyrians that one of the conditions of settlement in Brazil would be the acquisition of Brazilian nationality.

*The President* doubted whether the committee could suggest such a condition to the Brazilian Government.

*The French Representative* replied that it was a question of the manner in which the matter was represented to the Brazilian Government. The committee might put it in the form that, if it would help matters, they were ready to tell the Assyrians that one of the conditions must be the acquisition of Brazilian nationality.

*The President* said that in any case he felt that nothing could be done until a reply had been received from the Spanish Ambassador to the telegram which was about to be addressed to him. He did not think that anything on the subject of national status could usefully be inserted in that telegram.

*The Mexican Representative* thought that the acquisition by the Assyrians of Brazilian nationality might not be acceptable to the Brazilian Government, as it would thus be impossible for them to send away any of the Assyrians who might not settle in Brazil. The difficulty created by the third Brazilian condition would not be solved.

*The Danish Representative* said that this led him to return to the suggestion which he had made earlier by letter that the question of the return clause on Nansen passports should be taken up with the Iraqi Government, and that the documents relevant to the Nansen passport procedure should be communicated to that Government.

*The President* doubted whether this would be useful at the moment, when it was uncertain whether the Iraqi Government would even agree to the repatriation of such Assyrians as might undoubtedly be Iraqi nationals.

Reference was then made to an opinion, dated the 13th March, by the Legal Section of the League of Nations, regarding the eventual status of the Assyrians who might emigrate to Brazil.

*Mr. Walters* pointed out that that opinion had been written under a misapprehension of the actual facts and was based on the supposition that the number of Assyrians of Iraqi nationality was much greater than now appeared to be the case. However, he did not think that that affected the conclusions of the opinion, which tended to deprecate any attempt to apply the Nansen passport procedure to the Assyrians. *Mr. Walters* read out the conclusions, which were as follows:—

"To ask Iraq to accept the Nansen arrangements is to ask her to accept more than is really necessary for the purpose, because these arrangements apply primarily to Armenians and Russians. Iraq may not want to go so far. For practical purposes, if there are Assyrians whom Iraq will not treat as her nationals, it could be quite well arranged for her to issue them special documents of identity containing a clause authorising return to Iraq. The Nansen passport is not the only document which can be used to enable a person without nationality to travel from one country to another.

"In any case, any sort of immediate *démarche* to call the attention of Iraq to the Nansen arrangements with a view to her accepting them, would, I think, raise the general question in an inconvenient way. It is true that Iraq has not had her attention called to those arrangements, which were not sent to her when she entered the League, but it would seem much better to decide (after consultation with Iraq, if necessary) what course ought to be proposed to Iraq and then make a definite proposal."

*The Danish Representative* asked whether the three Brazilian conditions had been communicated to the Iraqi Government, and whether it would be useful to ask the Iraqi Government for definite figures regarding the nationality of the Assyrians.

*The President* explained that particular care had been taken not to communicate the three Brazilian conditions to the Iraqi Government. It had simply been explained to the Iraqi delegation that the Brazilian consent was one of principle only, and that various details remained to be discussed.

*The United Kingdom Representative* doubted whether any useful purpose would be served by asking the Iraqi Government for detailed figures, as it was probable that exact statistics did not exist. While he naturally could not say what line the Iraqi Government would take if the question of providing the Assyrians with a document, which would eventually allow them to return to Iraq, were raised, he felt bound to point out to the committee that it would be asking a great deal of the Iraqi Government. The position was, he repeated, that the majority of the Assyrians were, in fact, Stateless refugees in Iraq. The question of their removal to Brazil had arisen because they declared themselves unable to remain any longer in Iraq. If the Iraqi Government contributed financially to their settlement in Brazil, it was hardly likely that they would willingly agree that they could come back to Iraq at any time if they did not like Brazil. It had been suggested that the proposal which he had made, that they should be invested as soon as possible with Brazilian nationality, would not solve the difficulty created by the third Brazilian condition. That might be the case, but he claimed that a solution of the nationality problem in the manner which he had proposed might facilitate consideration of that condition. In any case, the difficulties created by the condition would equally not be solved by the proposal which had been made for the provision of Nansen passports with a return clause. It was not merely a question of the consent of the Iraqi Government to receiving these people back. The point was, who was going to be responsible for sending them back and, above all, paying for their return journey.

*The President* said that this was a difficult question which he thought the committee would only be able to refer back to the Council for further consideration.

*The Danish Representative* expressed the view that it lay with the Brazilian Government to indicate who must be responsible for resettling the Assyrians outside Brazil, if they did not settle there.

*The United Kingdom Representative* pointed out that the Brazilian Government had so far said that Paraná Plantations (Limited) must be responsible, but the responsibility was one which the company clearly could not take.

*The Danish Representative* said that in that case he presumed that the Brazilian Government must hold the Iraqi Government responsible.

*The President* observed that this was a responsibility which the Iraqi Government might not be willing to accept.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that it was precisely because His Majesty's Government had foreseen these difficulties which were now being raised that they had suggested what might seem the rather arbitrary solution of making the Assyrians Brazilian nationals as quickly as possible and preferable from the outset.

*The Danish Representative* suggested that the difficulty might prove eventually not to be a serious one in practice. It might be arranged that the Assyrians should assume Brazilian nationality after a short period, and the responsibility of the Iraqi Government to take them back might be limited to that period. If, as seemed to be the case, the area selected in Paraná was suitable, the question of responsibility might then never arise in practice.

*The President* observed that a further point which would have to be considered in connexion with the third Brazilian condition was what body or authority was to decide whether dissatisfied Assyrians should be repatriated or removed from Brazil. He thought, however, that the whole discussion had best be adjourned until the reply from the Spanish Ambassador was received. If negotiations were possible, the point about nationality would have to be gone into very fully in the instructions which would have to be sent out to Rio.



Discussion then took place on future procedure, in view of the fact that the reply from the Spanish Ambassador might be delayed owing to the Easter holiday in Brazil. It was suggested that, if the reply was categorical in the sense that Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson ought to return, the President should have discretion to authorise their return without further consulting the committee, and that he should then convene a meeting to confer with the mission on their return to Europe. It was pointed out, however, that, if the mission returned, it would presumably mean that further negotiations were not at present possible, and it was likely that the committee would have to meet at the earliest possible moment to decide what was to be done in such circumstances. The general feeling was that, while little further progress could be made pending the receipt of the Spanish Ambassador's reply, the committee should not officially adjourn, but that it should simply be left to the President to call the next meeting when he thought fit.

The question then arose of the situation in Iraq if there was likely to be long delay. The President recalled that Major Thomson was at present in Geneva and was about to return to Iraq. It would be useful if he could attend a meeting at which Brigadier Browne's report could be considered, with the Iraqi representative and the President of the Nansen Office.

It was decided to arrange such a meeting for the following day. It was agreed that the President should then explain to the Iraqi representative that, though Brigadier Browne's report was favourable, the situation in Brazil was such that some delay in fixing up the details was inevitable, and the committee would be glad to be assured that during the interval everything would be done by the Iraqi Government to ensure the safety and well-being of the Assyrians.

J. C. STERNDAL BENNETT.

#### Annex to Enclosure.

*Telegram from President of Assyrian Committee to the Spanish Ambassador in Rio de Janeiro, March 26, 1934.*

HAVING received Browne's report, which appears satisfactory, committee are in doubt as to next step. They have taken note of opinion expressed in your telegram of the 21st March that political situation makes arrival of Assyrians impossible for the moment. On other hand, delay is most undesirable and difficult to justify now that Browne's report has been received. Next stage would normally be negotiations with Brazilian Government with object of examining conditions laid down by latter, and of obtaining for communication to Assyrians information regarding their eventual treatment in civil matters in Brazil. Committee would value your opinion whether it is really useless to open such negotiations at present. If so, do you consider more favourable opportunity likely to occur in near future? Committee cannot, of course, allow uncertain situation to drag on indefinitely, and may think it advisable to offer to negotiate if only thereby to clear it up.

Question may be affected by proceedings of Commission of Enquiry into Assyrian immigration which committee understand Brazilian Government to have set up. They would be glad of your view on this point together with any information regarding procedure of commission and probable length of its deliberations.

Immediate question is whether Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson should leave Brazil on the 7th April. Committee must take into account financial considerations, but would be glad to know whether you would like them to remain in connexion with the proposed negotiations if they take place or in connexion with Commission of Enquiry. If so, do you think that Johnson, whose services would be valuable here, need stay as well as Browne?

You will, no doubt, think it well to consult British Ambassador before sending your reply which committee would be grateful to receive as soon as possible.

[E 2053/1/93]

No. 129.

*United Kingdom Delegate to Foreign Office.—(Received April 3.)*

(No. 28.)

THE United Kingdom delegate to the League of Nations presents his compliments, and has the honour to transmit copy of a note of the 20th meeting of the Assyrian Committee of Council, on the 27th March, 1934, of which a copy has been sent to His Majesty's Ambassador, Bagdad.

*United Kingdom Delegation, Geneva,  
March 31, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 129.

ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

*Record of the 20th Meeting of the Council Committee held on March 27, 1934,  
at 11-15 A.M.*

THE committee first met in private to decide the question whether Brigadier Browne's report should be published. The League Secretariat were understood to be in favour of immediate publication.

The United Kingdom Representative asked whether it was proposed to publish the whole of the non-confidential report, i.e., the covering memorandum signed by the three members of the mission, the note by Brigadier Browne and the report by Major Johnson to the president of the Nansen Office. The last of these three documents did not seem entirely suitable for publication, as it was intended rather for the guidance of the committee and was full of detail, but it was referred to in the covering memorandum. As regards Brigadier Browne's note, the United Kingdom representative thought that there were certain passages which had much better not be published at this stage, more particularly the final section of paragraph 6, which might arouse the apprehensions of the Brazilian Government as suggesting an intention to retain a certain autonomy for the Assyrians. There were perhaps other passages in the note which it might be undesirable to publish, in view of their possible effect on the Assyrians. The only part of the report which seemed suitable for publication at this stage was perhaps the introductory memorandum, but even the publication of this might raise false hopes among the Assyrians by leading them to believe that the question of their emigration was virtually settled. On the whole, therefore, the United Kingdom representative thought publication undesirable at present.

The Mexican, French and Italian Representatives expressed agreement.

The Danish Representative, on the other hand, suggested that publication should be considered as a means of bringing pressure to bear on the Brazilian Government. He thought that it would be useful in preventing delay and bringing the Brazilian Government into the open, and he suggested that the whole report should be published, but that those portions which might give rise to trouble either with the Assyrians or with the Brazilian Government should be deleted, and that publication should be accompanied by a note indicating that much yet remained to be done before the Assyrians could go to Brazil.

The President thought that the question which the Danish representative had raised could scarcely be considered pending the reply of the Spanish Ambassador, when the committee would be better able to judge whether publication would be useful or not. His inclination was against publication, without prejudice, however, to the further consideration of the question at a later date. He agreed that publication might give a too optimistic impression and cause misunderstanding among the Assyrians. He observed also that a further report from Brigadier Browne was apparently being prepared, and it might perhaps be best to publish the various reports eventually as annexes to a report from the Council Committee to the Council, which would explain the whole position.

[10923]

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*The Danish Representative* expressed his readiness not to press the proposal for publication in the circumstances, but to await further information from Brazil. He suggested, however, that the attention of the Iraqi delegation, to whom the report had been communicated, should be drawn to the fact that it was to be regarded for the present as confidential.

*Mr. Walters* then raised the question of the communication of the report to the Brazilian Government. He thought that immediate communication to that Government was most desirable.

A somewhat lengthy discussion took place on this point. It was urged by the Danish representative that the adoption of *Mr. Walters's* suggestion would have the advantage of bringing pressure to bear on the Brazilian Government without the disadvantage of publication. Moreover, if the Brazilian Government were still prepared to proceed with the scheme, the report might help them in dealing with the opposition, and in that case, the sooner it was communicated to them the better. Some members of the committee, on the other hand, felt that communication was a leap in the dark, and that it would be better before taking any action to await the appreciation of the position for which the Spanish Ambassador was being asked. The communication of the report might then serve as a useful introduction to negotiations or as a means of eliciting from the Brazilian Government a definite reply as to whether they would continue the scheme or not. It was pointed out, however, that, as yet at all events, the committee had no official ground for supposing that the Brazilian Government proposed to withdraw from their previous attitude; that the closest co-operation with the Brazilian Government was desirable, and that the Brazilian Government, who knew that the report had been sent to Geneva, might be offended if its communication to them was delayed, particularly if they heard that it had been communicated to the Iraqi Government. The proposal was accordingly made by *Mr. Walters* that the report should be handed unofficially and confidentially by Brigadier Browne to the Brazilian authorities, with whom he had been collaborating.

The discussion was interrupted at this point by the arrival of the Iraqi representative and the president of the Nansen Office.

*The President* observed that the Iraqi representative would have seen from the copy communicated to him that Brigadier Browne's report on the Paraná area was favourable. At the same time, to avoid any misunderstanding, he felt bound to explain that certain difficulties had arisen in Brazil and there might therefore be a certain delay before a solution was reached. In the circumstances the committee wished to ask the Iraqi representative to enquire of his Government what measures they contemplated for the well-being and protection of the Assyrians and the maintenance of stability and order until emigration should be possible.

*The Iraqi Representative* said that on his side he had intended to draw the committee's attention to the difficult situation which might be created if there were long delay. He had decided, in particular, to ask the committee to consider the question of the Assyrians in the Mosul camp. When that camp was set up the Iraqi Government had thought it would be for only two or three months. There had already been a long delay and the Iraqi Government had incurred considerable expense in consequence, the expenses for the month of January only having been £1,400. A monthly charge of this nature was a heavy burden. If the delay was likely to persist, he would like to know for his personal information whether there was any alternative. The Iraqi Government had made certain promises and were doing their best, but they felt that their friends were not helping sufficiently. For instance, no progress had been made with the French Government regarding the transfer to Syria of the families of those Assyrians who had remained in Syria last summer. No reply had been received from the French Government to a reasonable proposal which had been made about the transfer of these families. On the other hand, the Mar Shimun was making journeys on the Continent and printing pamphlets. He was engaging in harmful propaganda and did not appear to realise the expense which the Iraqi Government was incurring on behalf of his people. If there were likely to be long delay, the Iraqi representative would like to discuss in a friendly and informal manner what was to be done about this question of keeping the families of men who had left the country. The Iraqi Government did not wish to hamper the work of the Council

Committee, but they must think of the future. He was raising the matter at the moment on his own responsibility and not under instructions. If the committee thought that the present position must continue, he would report accordingly to the Iraqi Government for their consideration, but he thought it was fair to expect the committee to help the Iraqi Government. As one means of assistance the committee might consider the refusal of the Assyrians to cultivate their lands. They were refusing to return to their villages for this purpose and were getting rid of their flocks, &c. The task of the Iraqi Government, in the circumstances, was a very difficult one, and, perhaps, the committee might indicate to the Assyrians that they ought to proceed with cultivation. Further, he appealed to the French Government to help in the matter of the families. If help were not given, in one way or another, the Iraqi Government might be obliged to distribute the refugees in the Mosul camp among the villages, giving two or three to each headman to look after and giving him a little assistance for this purpose. A great deal, however, depended on the help which the Council Committee was willing to afford.

*The French Representative* said that the Iraqi representative had made reference to the attitude of the French Government over the question of the families. He would like, therefore, to draw the attention of the Iraqi representative to a letter of the 25th March, which the French delegation had addressed to the president of the Council Committee, and which had just been distributed (see C. Min. Ass./25).

*The President* said that at its next meeting the committee would consider the remarks which the Iraqi representative had made, and would, no doubt, wish to have a further exchange of views with him on the subject.

The president then asked *Mr. Werner* whether he had any observations on Brigadier Browne's report.

*M. Werner* said that he had no observations to make on the report. He felt it rather outside his competence to do so as he did not consider himself as a technical expert. So far as he could judge, however, it seemed to him that the mission had adequately fulfilled its task, and he hoped that the return of Major Johnson, at all events, would not be long delayed, as, from the technical point of view, there seemed no further reason for him to remain in Brazil, and the Nansen Office was badly in need of his services.

*The President* then said that the committee sympathised with *M. Werner's* difficulties in this respect, but the question of the return of the mission was not an easy one as there were certain difficulties in Brazil.

*M. Werner* expressed himself as quite willing in the circumstances to leave the question of Major Johnson's return entirely to the committee.

The president of the Nansen Office and the Iraqi representative then withdrew, and the committee proceeded once more to consider the question of the communication of Brigadier Browne's report to the Brazilian Government.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that he had been principally desirous that the report should not be published. The proposal now was that the report should be communicated confidentially to the Brazilian authorities by Brigadier Browne. This proposal was not open to the same objections as publication. At the same time he felt there were certain objections. One or two passages, in particular the last section of paragraph 6 in Brigadier Browne's note, were liable to antagonise the Brazilian Government. Personally, he would have preferred to have postponed communication to the Brazilian Government until the situation was clearer, but he appreciated the advantages which had been urged in favour of immediate communication, and did not, therefore, wish to obstruct that course. He thought, however, that it would be a mistake to communicate the report without deleting certain passages.

*The President* agreed that certain passages must be deleted, and he would like to go further than the United Kingdom representative and suggest that all references to the Mar Shimun should be cut out, in view of the controversial nature of the Mar Shimun's position. He referred to the last sentence of paragraph 3 of Brigadier Browne's note. The question whether the Assyrians should drink yerba mate tea was, perhaps, a trivial point, but it seemed to him



that, if the Brazilian Government obtained the impression that even a point of this nature required the Mar Shimun's orders, they might have considerable misgivings about his position.

The French Representative suggested that the best procedure would probably be not merely to delete certain passages in communicating the report to the Brazilian Government, but to ask Brigadier Browne to delete those passages altogether from his report, so that they would also not appear when the report was eventually published. This suggestion was adopted, and it was agreed to send Brigadier Browne a telegram of which the text is annexed.<sup>(1)</sup>

As the committee was about to rise, a short discussion took place on future procedure.

The United Kingdom Representative pointed out that Major Thomson was due to leave for Iraq on the 30th March. He knew that Major Thomson, who, although the servant of the Iraqi Government, regarded himself also as acting to some extent on behalf of the committee, had hoped to be able to return to his duties with some kind of message to the Assyrians, which would have the authority of the committee behind it. The United Kingdom representative asked whether the committee thought it worth while that Major Thomson's departure for Iraq should be postponed, if possible, until the committee could consider the position in Iraq, and particularly the remarks made by Taufiq Beg Suwaidi on this point, in the light of the Spanish Ambassador's appreciation of the position in Brazil.

It was agreed that it might be a great help eventually if Major Thomson's departure for Iraq could be postponed, and the United Kingdom representative was authorised to arrange this, if possible, on behalf of the committee.

J. C. STERNDAL BENNETT.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

[E 2122/1/93]

No. 130.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received April 5.)*

(No. 161.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, March 22, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I visited the Assyrian refugee camp at Mosul on the 14th March, and afterwards received two deputations of Assyrians at the British consulate.

2. I went round every tent and living-room in the camp and asked the women whether they had any complaints or suggestions to make for the health and comfort of themselves or their children. The answer was almost the same in every case. They expressed gratitude for the abundant food and excellent arrangements which had been made for their accommodation, but enquired anxiously how long it would be before they could be removed to another country approved by the League of Nations. I have seldom seen such healthy-looking children, and no trace of the eye disease with which they are so commonly afflicted in their own homes was noticeable. The Assyrian doctor in charge of the medical arrangements in the camp informed me that there had been practically no sickness among the refugees since the 1st January, and that the very few deaths which had occurred were among sickly new-born infants who had no chance of surviving. Dr. McLeod, the civil surgeon of Mosul, who has had a long experience of medical work in this country, told me that he had no hesitation in saying that these Assyrian refugees enjoyed far better conditions of health and general well-being than they were accustomed to in their own villages.

3. The two deputations of Assyrian men whom I interviewed complained chiefly of the delay which had occurred in finding a new home for those Assyrians who wished to leave Iraq. They informed me that practically the whole Assyrian community was anxious to go, if a suitable country could be found elsewhere.

I explained to them that it was no easy matter to transplant 20,000 refugees to a distant country, and that I had warned them on my previous visit that no exodus could begin before July at the earliest. I explained that the League had set up a special committee, which had held several meetings at Geneva and had despatched a committee of experts to South America to make enquiries and report. I impressed on them once more that they should do everything to prevent able-bodied Assyrians from leaving their cultivated lands and crowding into the towns, and I hinted that preference might be given by the local committee to those who had cheerfully tried to make the best of things and had continued to till their lands in the villages. It was likely that whatever Government agreed to receive them would require that the new settlers should be agriculturists.

4. The warm clothing that had so kindly been purchased by Lord Lugard and the "Save the Children Fund" was unfortunately despatched by the long route via Basra, in spite of the instructions sent from Bagdad, and the bulk of it arrived in Mosul on the day of my visit. Although this clothing arrived too late to be of use during the winter, it is a very welcome reserve for future emergencies. As I informed you in a previous telegram, the Iraqi Government made a liberal provision of warm clothes and bedding for the refugees during the past cold season, and I did not receive a single complaint on the score of insufficiency of clothing during my visit to the camp.

5. The plight of the refugees who have come in from the villages to Mosul gives no cause for serious anxiety at present, as there is still plenty of money in the possession of the Assyrian community, and the well-to-do are notoriously generous in assisting their less fortunate fellow-tribesmen. Every effort, however, is still being made by British and Iraqi officials in the service of the Iraqi Government to induce these refugees to return to their villages and work in the fields until arrangements have been made to accommodate them in a new country.

6. The general attitude of the Assyrians in the Mosul Province may be described as one of restless expectation, and I desire once more to utter a solemn warning that, if the present negotiations for their removal result in a deadlock, a highly dangerous situation is likely to develop in this country. Should the Iraqi Government become involved in trouble with any of the tribes, especially the Shias of the Euphrates, which is an ever present possibility, there is little doubt that the Assyrians in the Mosul Province, who probably possess at least 4,000–5,000 rifles, will attempt once more to embarrass the Government by an armed rising. The Iraqi Government are only too conscious of this danger and may take the opportunity of fostering ill-feeling between the Kurds and the Assyrians in peaceful times in order to protect themselves against a serious threat in time of trouble. This very real danger emphasises the necessity of settling the Assyrian problem once and for all with the least possible delay.

7. If the difficulties with the Brazilian Government are overcome and only the question of finance remains, I trust that His Majesty's Government will be prepared to offer assistance by means of a recoverable loan without interest. I have already suggested in my letter to Sir Lancelot Oliphant of the 28th December last how this might be done, in conjunction with an irrecoverable contribution from the Iraqi Government.

8. It is unnecessary for me to dwell on the embarrassing position in which His Majesty's Government would be placed in the event of further disturbances, whether provoked by malcontent Assyrians against the Iraqi Government or due to aggravated friction between the Assyrians and the Kurds, especially in view of the fact that there are still about 800 Assyrian levies whose duty it is to defend the Royal Air Force aerodromes in this country.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.



## ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

*Record of the Twenty-second Meeting of the Council Committee, held on April 9, 1934, at 4 P.M.—(Communicated by United Kingdom Delegation, Geneva; Received April 13, 1934.)*

AT the request of the president, the *United Kingdom Representative* read out to the committee the text of two telegrams received from His Majesty's Ambassador at Rio de Janeiro (see Annexes A and B).<sup>(1)</sup>

The President then proposed that the committee should consider what further progress, if any, could be made pending the return to Europe of Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson, and that it should take, as a basis, the draft of a letter to the Spanish Ambassador at Rio de Janeiro which had been prepared by the United Kingdom representative (Annex C<sup>(1)</sup>). Before the committee considered this draft in detail, however, the president wished to make a statement as the representative of Spain. The committee would recall, he said, that at first it had asked the Spanish representative in Rio to use his good offices to persuade the Brazilian Government to modify a decision which would have made a solution of the Assyrian problem in Brazil impossible. The committee was aware of the negotiations which had followed. By a kind of "automatisme" the Spanish Ambassador had come to play a preponderant rôle, and the committee was now considering a draft letter instructing him to take further action on its behalf. For his part, M. Oliván was ready to facilitate matters, but he must enter a reservation against sole responsibility being placed on the Spanish Ambassador, at all events, when the stage of formal negotiations was reached. He was bound to consider this matter from the point of view of Spain, although he did not wish to insist too much on that point of view. But, in any case, it was not altogether fair to the Spanish Ambassador, who had no special knowledge of the problem, to place the whole responsibility on him. If the committee approved the draft letter, he was prepared to facilitate matters by sending it to the Spanish Ambassador, provided that it was in the nature not of instructions but of suggestions or indications. The Spanish Ambassador could not, in fact, receive instructions from the League. M. Oliván had at first felt that it would be necessary for him to refer the whole matter to his Government before anything further was addressed to the Spanish Ambassador. If, however, the proposed letter was sent in the form which he had suggested, he did not think it was necessary at this stage to bring in his Government. He was prepared to consider the matter as merely a continuation of the unofficial discussions which the Spanish Ambassador had already been conducting. But if the Ambassador was now charged with the task of making certain soundings, it must not be treated as a precedent or taken to mean that the Spanish Ambassador should always be responsible for acting on behalf of the League in this matter. If, when the purely preliminary stage now contemplated was over, formal steps were necessary, he would be obliged to ask the committee to reconsider the whole question of the channel of negotiations. M. Oliván repeated that he had no wish to make difficulties, but had thought it right to put the position quite clearly to the committee.

The members of the committee indicated that they perfectly understood M. Oliván's difficulties and were grateful to him for agreeing to facilitate matters to the extent of asking the Spanish Ambassador to conduct the informal discussions now proposed.

The Danish Representative thought it important that the Spanish Ambassador should emphasise in all that he might do that he was acting solely on behalf of the League.

The President said that he proposed to accompany the letter from the committee, if approved, with a purely personal letter from himself making this suggestion, and also explaining the position quite clearly to the Spanish Ambassador.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

The committee then proceeded to discuss the draft letter. The modifications suggested, in so far as they were not purely formal, chiefly aimed at making the draft more objective, as it was felt that it would be best at this stage merely to discuss the various courses open, and the advantages and disadvantages of each, without definitely committing the committee to any particular solution until the ground had been prepared and the reaction of the Brazilian Government was known.

The draft despatch having been accepted, the president said that he would send it to the Spanish Ambassador at Rio by the next air mail. It was agreed that it should be sent in French, and that the text in that language should be circulated in due course to the members of the committee.

A discussion followed on future procedure. It was felt desirable that the committee should hold a meeting as soon as possible after the return to Europe of Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson, subject to the convenience of Brigadier Browne in particular, who might wish to go to England before coming to Geneva. The president asked the United Kingdom representative to find out what date would be convenient for Brigadier Browne to come to Geneva, and it was left that the president should fix the date of the next meeting when he had this information from the United Kingdom representative.

In the meantime, it was decided to regard the despatch to the Spanish Ambassador and the fact that he was engaged in discussion with the Brazilian Government as strictly confidential.

The question was raised whether the substance of the proposed message to the Assyrians should be given to the press. The secretariat were in favour of doing this at once. It was felt, however, that it was scarcely possible to give any publicity to the message, at all events until the note to the Iraqi representative had reached the Iraqi Government, particularly in view of the fact that that note stated that the committee were not in a position to address a direct message to the Assyrians and were merely offering to assist the Iraqi Government by authorising them to communicate such a message. It was eventually decided to say nothing to the press except that the committee had that day discussed the situation of the Assyrians in Iraq with the Iraqi representative and with Major Thomson, who was on the point of returning to Iraq, and that the committee would next meet on the return to Europe of Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson.

*United Kingdom Delegate to the Foreign Office.—(Received April 13.)*

(No. 30.)

THE United Kingdom delegate to the League of Nations presents his compliments, and has the honour to transmit copy of a record of the twenty-first meeting of the Council Committee, on the 9th April, 1934, respecting the Assyrian question, of which a copy has been sent to His Majesty's Ambassador, Bagdad.

*United Kingdom Delegation,  
Geneva, April 10, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 132.

## ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

*Record of the Twenty-first Meeting of the Council Committee held on April 9, 1934, at 10.30 A.M.*

THE PRESIDENT first drew attention to the telegram of the 29th March from the Spanish Ambassador, which had already been circulated (Annex A<sup>(1)</sup>), and in view of which he had taken the responsibility of authorising the return of the mission from Brazil on the 7th April. Since then he had discussed with the

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.



League Secretariat and with the United Kingdom representative what procedure could now most advantageously be followed. He had come to the conclusion that the committee might, in the first place, usefully employ some time in giving satisfaction to the request which the Iraqi representative had made at the last meeting of the committee, in connexion with the situation of the Assyrians in Iraq pending emigration. The Iraqi representative had suggested a message from the committee to the Assyrians. It was difficult for the committee to issue such a message direct, but there seemed no reason why it should not transmit a message to the Iraqi Government for the latter to communicate to the Assyrians. A draft of a letter to the Iraqi representative on these lines had now been drawn up. The president proposed that the present meeting should be devoted to the examination of this draft and to the examination of various reports received from the Iraqi Government regarding the local situation. The Iraqi representative had been invited to join the committee at midday, with Major Thomson, and it would then be possible to discuss with him the proposed message to the Assyrians and any question arising out of the Iraqi Government's reports. The question of the next step in Brazil also remained for consideration, but the president proposed that this should be left to be dealt with at a meeting in the same afternoon.

A draft letter to the Iraqi representative and a draft message to the Assyrians were then circulated (Annex B<sup>(1)</sup>).

*The Danish Representative* criticised the reference in the first paragraph of the draft letter to the "political side" of the question. It was agreed to substitute the words "many important aspects."

The Danish representative further questioned the advisability of the reference in the second paragraph to the engagements assumed by the Iraqi Government *vis-à-vis* of the League. He did not desire to dispute that the Iraqi Government were under a definite obligation to the League, but he thought that the phrasing was not best calculated to ensure the willing co-operation of the Iraqi Government. It was the kind of phrase which might be used if one had reason to believe that the Government concerned were trying to evade their obligations, but credit must be given to the Iraqi Government for having done their best to keep the peace.

*The President* said that he was to some extent in agreement with the Danish representative, as he did not wish to give any offence to the Iraqi Government. At the same time, he thought it was not out of place to call their attention to engagements which they had taken.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that he thought it was possible to lay greater emphasis on the responsibility of the Iraqi Government without using the phrase to which the Danish representative had raised objection, by inverting the order of the draft. Most of the second paragraph might be deleted and a further paragraph added instead at the end of the draft, to the effect that the committee wished to point out that the extent to which the Assyrians would be likely to follow the advice contained in the proposed message would depend chiefly on the measures taken by the Iraqi Government themselves to ensure their security; and that the committee, in authorising the communication of the message, relied implicitly upon the Iraqi Government to take all the necessary steps for the well-being and protection of the Assyrians and for the maintenance of stability and order in the areas where they might reside, until emigration should be possible.

This suggestion was adopted, and the committee proceeded to consider the terms of the message to the Assyrians.

*The Danish Representative* suggested an addition to the last paragraph to the effect that, by carrying on their normal life, the Assyrians would not only not be penalised, but would give evidence of their suitability as settlers in the country which might eventually accept them. With this, and one or two formal amendments, the draft message was accepted.

*The United Kingdom Representative* raised the question whether, when the Iraqi representative appeared at the meeting, the text of the message was to be given to him as something which had already been decided by the committee or as a draft to be considered with him.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

It was agreed that the text should be given to the Iraqi representative as a draft and that he should be invited to offer observations on it.

*The Danish Representative* asked whether it was also proposed to discuss in the same way with the Iraqi representative the terms of the letter to be addressed to him.

It was agreed that this was unnecessary and might only give the Iraqi representative opportunity to make embarrassing objections, whereas the committee was perfectly free to send the Iraqi representative a letter in such terms as it might think fit. It was agreed, however, that the president, in presenting the text of the message to the Iraqi representative, should accompany it with an oral explanation which would, in fact, express the substance of the proposed letter.

The committee then considered Documents C.Min.Ass./22, 23 and 27. It was agreed that it would be useful to put one or two questions to the Iraqi representative on these documents, if only to show that the committee attached importance to them, and scrutinised them closely, and it was decided, in particular, to ask for more precise information regarding the reconstruction of the villages which had been partially or wholly destroyed during the events of last summer, and regarding the expenses incurred in connexion with the refugee camp at Mosul, since, according to the Iraqi reports, these expenses appeared to fluctuate in a manner which was difficult to understand.

At noon the Iraqi representative, accompanied by Major Thomson, entered the meeting.

*The President* informed him that the committee had attentively examined the reports regarding the local situation in Iraq which he had addressed to it since the last session of the committee in January. There were one or two points on which the committee would be glad of further information. In report (c), circulated in C.Min.Ass./22, the statement was made that all villages which were destroyed, wholly or partly, prior to December 1933 had been repaired. The committee would be glad to know whether this referred, in fact, to all the villages which had been occupied by the Assyrians prior to the events of last summer, or whether it only referred to those villages to which the Assyrians had since returned. It was important for the committee to know whether the villages to which no Assyrians had yet returned had also been repaired and whether, therefore, the Assyrians could reasonably be expected to go back there.

*The Iraqi Representative* said that the reports which he had passed on to the committee represented the substance of information which he had received from time to time from the Iraqi Government. He assumed that this particular statement was to be taken literally, *i.e.*, that it referred to all the villages occupied by Assyrians prior to the events of last summer. He was, however, not absolutely certain on the point.

*The President* said that the committee would be glad if details could be obtained.

*The Iraqi Representative* drew attention to the fact that in report (c) in C.Min.Ass./27, which was dated February, it was again stated that all the destroyed houses were then being reconstructed. He took this as confirmation of the earlier statement, but he would, of course, try to obtain full information. He stated that he himself had visited a large number of villages before coming to Geneva. Some of them were quite small, consisting perhaps of only half a dozen houses, and many of these small villages had been entirely abandoned by the Assyrians. He was not in a position to say categorically that such villages had been reconstructed.

*The President* said that the committee had also noticed from the reports before them that the Iraqi Government had spent on the feeding of the Assyrians in the Mosul camp £1,809 in December, £1,458 in January, and only £851 in February. It would interest the committee to know what was the reason for this very marked diminution. Did it involve any alteration of the arrangements or of the numbers of the Assyrians in the camp?

*The Iraqi Representative* suggested that Major Thomson might be able to throw some light on these figures.



*Major Thomson* said that one item by which expenses had been reduced during his absence related to the use of a car which he had for visiting Assyrian villages. In December the cost of transport had probably been rather high, as *Major Wilson* and himself had been touring the country in order to give effect to the committee's resolution of the 31st October by explaining the situation to the Assyrians. Moreover, a number of hired tents had been replaced by much better Government tents, and this involved a further reduction of expenditure of about £100 a month. He assumed that these and other items must have been debited to "feeding the Assyrians" for the actual cost of feeding came to nothing like the figures mentioned in the reports. He thought that the gradual reduction in those figures must be due to the diminution or disappearance of outside expenses connected with the camp, and he did not think that it implied any reduction of the money actually spent on the refugees or in the number of the refugees.

*The President*, after thanking *Major Thomson* for this explanation, reminded the Iraqi representative that, at the last meeting which he had attended, the committee had considered the situation of the Assyrians in Iraq during the interval which must elapse before emigration could take place. The committee had taken note of *Taufiq Beg's* suggestion that the committee might help the Iraqi Government by issuing a message to the Assyrians. An attempt had been made to give effect to this suggestion, and a text was about to be distributed. The committee had thought it well to discuss this text with the Iraqi representative, as, in the light of his knowledge of Assyrian mentality, he would be able to advise on the suitability of the message and perhaps to suggest modifications. The President wished to emphasise, however, on behalf of the committee, that the success of the action contemplated would depend chiefly on the measures taken by the Iraqi Government to ensure the security of the Assyrians. It was proposed to send the message, when approved, in a note to the Iraqi representative, pointing out that the committee could not very well address the Assyrians direct, but that it authorised the Iraqi Government to communicate the message to them as embodying the committee's views. In authorising the communication of the message, however, the committee relied implicitly on the Iraqi Government to take all possible measures for the well-being and protection of the Assyrians, and for the maintenance of stability and order in the areas where they resided until settlement took place.

The draft message was then distributed.

*The Iraqi Representative*, after examining it with *Major Thomson*, said that the latter, who was well acquainted with the psychology of the Assyrians, thought that the message covered all the points which it was necessary to put to the Assyrians and should have a useful effect. The Iraqi representative, therefore, agreed to the message, which the Iraqi Government would probably communicate to the Assyrians through the local committee presided over by *Major Thomson*.

*The President* said that, as regards procedure, the committee would, of course, leave the matter entirely in the hands of the Iraqi Government.

The president then asked the Iraqi representative whether he, on his side, wished to raise any questions.

*The Iraqi Representative* said that at the present stage, when matters seemed to be held up by events in Brazil, he had little to say. The Iraqi Government had done everything and were doing everything possible to facilitate the committee's difficult task, and he hoped that this was realised by the committee. *Major Thomson* was returning that day to Iraq, and he might possibly be able to offer some useful observations about the future. As for the Iraqi Government, they would continue the measures already taken for the security of the Assyrians. This had, in fact, always been assured since the events of last summer. As regards the refugee camp in Mosul, this would be directed in the same way as heretofore, so long as the Brazilian scheme was under discussion. He wished, however, to reserve the right, if the Brazilian scheme broke down, perhaps to make proposals to the committee about the future of the camp. He felt that the question was one which would have to be brought before the committee and fully considered in the eventuality which he contemplated.

*The President* observed that the Iraqi representative had referred to "events" in Brazil. To remove any misunderstanding, he wished to make it

clear that there had been no "events" there; difficulties had simply arisen owing to opposition, in the press and in certain circles, to Assyrian immigration. But the committee could not work on the assumption that the Brazilian scheme was going to break down. There was no reason to assume this. Of course, if it did unfortunately break down, the whole situation would naturally have to be reconsidered.

At the request of the Iraqi representative, *Major Thomson* then made certain observations. He stressed the importance of the issue by the committee when the time came of a statement in the clearest and simplest language, setting out the conditions of Assyrian emigration. He thought the statement should, in particular, deal with the following points:—

- (1) Nationality.
- (2) The fact that land would have to be paid for by the emigrants, either at once or by instalments.
- (3) The fact that those paying at once would obtain their land freehold, and might have other preferential treatment.
- (4) Freedom of religion.
- (5) The language question.
- (6) Schools.
- (7) Civil rights.

*Major Thomson* also drew attention to the existence of two definite parties among the Assyrians: those who wished to follow the *Mar Shimun*, and those who wished to be settled outside his sphere of influence. This was a matter of great importance, and *Major Thomson* emphasised the necessity of taking it into account when the moment came for the transfer of the Assyrians from Iraq to their new home.

*The Danish Representative* said that the question of the *Mar Shimun* and his influence was a very difficult one. He thought that no impression should be created among the Assyrians at the present time that two settlements would be provided in Brazil. There were many difficulties involved.

General agreement was expressed with this view.

*The President* then asked the Iraqi delegation to be particularly careful not to give out information to the press on the Assyrian question. The committee was itself exercising the greatest care on this point, as the situation in Brazil was difficult and press messages had reached Brazil which had tended to increase the difficulty.

On the suggestion of the *Danish Representative*, it was agreed that, before *Major Thomson* left for Iraq, he should see the acting secretary-general of the Nansen Office to discuss as far as possible the details of transport, &c., which would arise when emigration took place.

*The Iraqi Representative* then returned to the question of the twofold settlement of the Assyrians. He said that the Iraqi Government considered a double settlement absolutely necessary. They had at first contemplated that one batch of Assyrians would be settled in one country and a second batch in another. It was admittedly a question of the future, but it was a point which would greatly influence the decision of the Assyrians as to whether or not they should leave Iraq. If they knew they were to be settled in a place under the influence of the *Mar Shimun*, a great many would not go. It was, in his view, a question of capital importance to tell the Assyrians whether two settlements would be possible or not.

*The President* said that the question would certainly have to be considered, but it did not arise immediately.

*The Mexican Representative* asked *Major Thomson* whether he thought that the Assyrians would be prepared to accept Brazilian nationality.

*Major Thomson* said that this was a most difficult question, on which he hesitated to express an opinion. They had not been willing to accept Iraqi nationality, and a large number had taken no steps to do so. But if the



assumption of Brazilian nationality was a part of the entire scheme and, so to speak, a condition of immigration, he saw no reason why it should prove an obstacle.

A copy of the message to the Assyrians as agreed upon at this meeting, together with a copy of the note in which it was subsequently sent to the Iraqi representative, is attached (see Annex C).

J. C. STERNDAL BENNETT.

Annexes A and B to Enclosure not printed.

Annex C to Enclosure.

*President of Assyrian Committee to Iraqi Permanent Delegate.*

Sir,

*Geneva, April 9, 1934.*

YOU will recall that at a meeting of the committee for the settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq on the 27th March last I explained to you, in my capacity as president, that, although the committee has now every reason to believe that the area in Parana where it is suggested that the Assyrians should be settled is suitable for the purpose, many important aspects of the question remain to be adjusted, and the difficulties involved render it inevitable that some delay must elapse before a satisfactory solution can be expected.

The committee is naturally anxious to ensure that no ill results should follow from this delay. At the above-mentioned meeting, at which I enquired of you what measures the Iraqi Government contemplated to this end, you intimated that it would greatly assist your Government if the committee could make it known that, in its view, the Assyrians ought, pending emigration, to pursue their normal life and, in particular, to proceed with the cultivation of their lands.

The committee is most ready to do what it can to collaborate in this way. As the Assyrians are under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Iraqi Government, the committee is scarcely in a position to address a direct message to them. With a view to assisting the Iraqi Government, however, it has drawn up the attached message, which it gladly authorises the Iraqi Government to communicate to the Assyrians as an expression of its views.

At the same time I desire to point out that the measure in which the Assyrians are likely to respond to the committee's advice will chiefly depend on the steps taken by the Iraqi Government to ensure their security. In authorising the communication of the enclosed message, therefore, the committee relies implicitly upon the Iraqi Government to take all possible measures for the well-being and protection of the Assyrians and for the maintenance of stability and order in the areas where they may reside until emigration shall be possible.

I have, &c.

LOPEZ OLIVAN,  
*President of the Committee.*

*Message to the Assyrians.*

The committee appointed by the League of Nations for the resettlement of those Assyrians who may wish to leave Iraq is making every effort to find a suitable home for them outside that country. But the Assyrians must remember that the problem is an exceedingly intricate one and that there are many difficulties to be overcome. Therefore, the finding of a solution which will be acceptable to those concerned may still take some considerable time.

Meanwhile, the committee wishes to emphasise most strongly the necessity of the Assyrians in Iraq being patient, and at the same time pursuing their normal methods of life, cultivating their farms, shepherding their flocks, &c.

They should not dispose of their household goods, crops or flocks until the question of their future home has been finally decided on, and they are told to do so by the local committee under Major Thomson's presidency, or by the representative of the Nansen Office who is in due course to join that committee.

The Assyrians must understand that the fact of their cultivating, shepherding and earning a livelihood will not only in no way be considered by the League Committee as an objection to their emigrating from Iraq, should they wish to do so when the time comes, but will, furthermore, together with their generally leading a normal and law-abiding life, be good evidence of their suitability as settlers in the country that may eventually accept them as immigrants.

[E 2307/1/93]

No. 133.

*United Kingdom Delegate, Geneva, to Foreign Office.—(Received April 13.)*  
(No. 31.)

THE United Kingdom delegate to the League of Nations presents his compliments, and has the honour to transmit copy of a letter from the president of the Assyrian Committee to the Spanish Ambassador, Rio de Janeiro, respecting the Assyrian question.

Copies have been sent to His Majesty's Ambassadors at Bagdad and Rio.

*United Kingdom Delegation, Geneva,*  
*April 10, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 133.

*President of the Assyrian Committee to the Spanish Ambassador at*  
*Rio de Janeiro.*

(Confidential.)

M. l'Ambassadeur,

*Genève, le 10 août 1934.*

LE Comité pour l'Établissement des Assyriens de l'Irak, institué par le Conseil de la Société des Nations, a reçu la lettre du Général de Brigade Browne, en date du 10 mars, à laquelle était joint son rapport, en deux parties, concernant l'établissement envisagé des Assyriens sur les terres de la "Paraná Plantations Limited," dans l'Etat de Paraná. Après avoir pris connaissance de la première partie de ce rapport (laquelle, sur l'autorisation du comité, a été communiquée confidentiellement par le Général de Brigade Browne aux autorités brésiliennes sous réserve de certaines modifications), le comité constate que le Général de Brigade Browne et ses deux conseillers, M. Redard et le Major Johnson, sont arrivés à la conclusion unanime que les terres de la compagnie conviennent, à tous égards, pour l'établissement des Assyriens.

2. Ayant ainsi établi par une enquête indépendante et impartiale, faite sur place, que le plan proposé est matériellement réalisable, le comité doit maintenant procéder avec le Gouvernement brésilien à un examen plus approfondi des conditions auxquelles ce dernier a subordonné son consentement à l'établissement des Assyriens au Brésil et de tous les détails de l'opération d'établissement. La communication que j'ai eu l'honneur d'adresser au Gouvernement brésilien, le 16 janvier dernier, par l'intermédiaire de votre Excellence, portait que cette démarche suivrait la réception d'un rapport favorable du Général de Brigade Browne.

3. Toutefois, depuis l'envoi de cette communication, un mouvement sérieux d'agitation contre le projet d'établissement des Assyriens s'est malheureusement produit au Brésil, et le comité, se demandant s'il était opportun, dans ces conditions, de faire actuellement une démarche auprès du Gouvernement brésilien, a autorisé l'envoi du télégramme que j'ai expédié à votre Excellence le 27 mars.

4. Le comité, à la lumière de la réponse de votre Excellence, en date du 29 mars, a maintenant recherché quels nouveaux progrès pourraient être réalisés actuellement. Le Gouvernement brésilien se rendra certainement compte de la situation très embarrassante dans laquelle la Société des Nations se trouverait si ce Gouvernement, après avoir formulé une offre précise, n'y donnait pas suite. Par ailleurs, il est certain qu'on peut faire valoir de sérieux arguments en faveur d'un ajournement de l'ouverture des négociations avec le Gouvernement brésilien, dans l'espoir que, dans l'intervalle, l'agitation hostile au plan en



question se calmera. D'autre part, pour la solution du problème que le comité est appelé à résoudre, le facteur temps est essentiel. Aussi longtemps que l'avenir des Assyriens ne sera pas réglé, on risquera de voir se produire de nouveaux troubles dans l'Irak et par conséquent le comité désire vivement que l'émigration commence le plus tôt possible. Toutefois, il reste encore à prendre de nombreuses mesures avant que le plan d'établissement dans l'Etat de Paraná puisse être mis à exécution. Il importe, en premier lieu, de régler les détails avec le Gouvernement brésilien et ce n'est qu'ensuite qu'il sera possible de soumettre aux Assyriens un plan précis et de connaître leurs vœux. Lorsqu'on aura déterminé ainsi le nombre de personnes qui désireront quitter l'Irak, il sera nécessaire de prendre des arrangements financiers avant qu'un contrat définitif puisse être conclu avec la Paraná Plantations Limited. Enfin, lorsque ce contrat aura été signé, la compagnie aura, semble-t-il, besoin de deux mois pour prendre toutes dispositions utiles en vue du mouvement d'émigration. Le comité croit savoir que les conditions pour les opérations d'établissement ne sont favorables que jusqu'en septembre. Il est donc évident que, si l'émigration doit s'effectuer cette année-ci, il faut éviter tout retard inutile, aussi court soit-il.

5. Tout en reconnaissant, par conséquent, que le rythme des négociations avec le Gouvernement brésilien doit nécessairement dépendre de la situation locale, le comité désire vivement qu'il n'y ait pas perte de temps; il s'est donc demandé quelle procédure serait à la fois la plus appropriée et la plus en harmonie avec les conseils contenus dans le télégramme de votre Excellence, du 29 mars. Les difficultés auxquelles on se heurte inévitablement en négociant une question d'une telle complexité à une distance aussi considérable, se trouveront naturellement accrues par suite de l'existence, au Brésil, d'un mouvement d'opposition. Il est difficile à un comité siégeant à Genève de rester en contact avec l'opinion brésilienne et de juger de l'opportunité d'une proposition ou d'une démarche particulière. De même un représentant brésilien, négociant à Genève, se heurtera également, dans une certaine mesure, à des difficultés. Ou bien il sera obligé de consulter fréquemment son Gouvernement, ce qui entraînera des retards, ou bien s'il négocie un accord sans consulter son Gouvernement, mais en réservant l'approbation ultérieure de ce dernier, cette approbation pourra, finalement, faire défaut. En outre, des négociations à Genève seraient inévitablement entourées d'une certaine publicité, que votre Excellence juge essentiel d'éviter.

6. Si un accord officiel entre le comité et le Gouvernement brésilien devenait nécessaire, il serait peut-être souhaitable qu'il fût finalement conclu à Genève; toutefois, pour éviter les divers inconvénients que je viens de mentionner, le comité estime qu'il y aurait en tout cas lieu de préparer sérieusement la voie par des conversations préliminaires de caractère officieux et rigoureusement confidentiel à Rio de Janeiro.

7. Le comité, qui désire qu'en ma qualité de président, je vous exprime sa profonde gratitude pour les mesures que vous avez déjà si efficacement jugé possible de prendre en son nom, vous serait reconnaissant de bien vouloir continuer à lui prêter votre concours en vous chargeant de ces pourparlers préliminaires confidentiels.

Au cas où des négociations d'un caractère plus officiel que celles qui sont présentement envisagées deviendraient, par la suite, nécessaires à Rio de Janeiro, le comité sera obligé de reprendre l'ensemble de la question de la procédure à employer en tenant compte de diverses considérations dans lesquelles il est inutile que j'entre maintenant. Il n'a nullement le désir, même pour les conversations officieuses qu'il propose aujourd'hui, de faire tomber toute la responsabilité sur l'envoyé d'un seul des Gouvernements représentés au comité et, tout en priant votre Excellence de bien vouloir continuer pour le moment d'être son porte-parole, il est persuadé que vous pouvez compter dans toute la mesure où vous aurez besoin sur l'appui des représentants des Gouvernements qui font partie du comité et il vous recommande notamment d'agir dans la plus étroite liaison avec l'Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté britannique, étant donné les renseignements spéciaux sur la question assyrienne que ce dernier possède probablement.

8. Le comité apprend que le Général de Brigade Browne et le Major Johnson élaborent un nouveau rapport plus détaillé sur les résultats de leur enquête, et il est hors de doute que l'opinion du comité, sur des points de détail, est susceptible d'être modifiée par la teneur de ce rapport et par les

impressions dont, très certainement, le Général de Brigade Browne et le Major Johnson feront part oralement au comité après leur retour en Europe. Si la question ne présentait pas un tel caractère d'urgence, le comité serait disposé à attendre le retour de la mission avant de prendre de nouvelles mesures. Toutefois, il estime qu'une telle procédure ferait perdre un temps précieux et qu'il y aurait avantage à vous faire connaître immédiatement ses conceptions générales sur la nature du règlement qui doit intervenir avec le Gouvernement brésilien, afin que, connaissant les principaux desiderata du comité, vous soyez en mesure d'engager sans retard des pourparlers officieux dès que vous le jugerez opportun. Ces pourparlers devraient toutefois, pour l'instant, se borner à explorer le terrain et ne comporter aucun engagement, étant entendu que l'exposé ci-après est susceptible d'être modifié et complété d'après l'examen de la situation auquel le comité procédera avec le Général de Brigade Browne et le Major Johnson, à leur retour à Genève.

9. Les négociations avec le Gouvernement brésilien porteront notamment sur les points ci-après :

(1) Les conditions suivantes posées par ce Gouvernement :

(a) Les Assyriens émigrant au Brésil devront être des agriculteurs; (b) ils ne devront occasionner aucune dépense au Brésil; et (c) la Paraná Plantations Limited devra s'engager à les rapatrier ou à les établir ailleurs, à ses frais, s'ils ne s'adaptent pas au Brésil.

(2) Le régime auquel les Assyriens seront soumis au Brésil, pour ce qui est des questions civiles et religieuses.

(3) Les détails matériels de l'établissement.

10. Toutefois, avant d'examiner ces questions en détail, il convient de régler une importante question de principe.

Le comité s'abstiendrait naturellement d'engager le Gouvernement brésilien à accepter les Assyriens s'il n'avait pas des raisons de croire que ces derniers seront probablement de bons colons. Les rapports dont dispose le comité indiquent que ceux-ci possèdent nombre d'excellentes qualités. Leurs difficultés antérieures ont été principalement dues au fait qu'ils ont vécu parmi des populations quelque peu turbulentes, de race étrangère et de religion différente, qui ne connaissaient guère de lois et, en grande partie, parce qu'ils ont vécu, ces temps derniers, comme réfugiés dans des conditions d'instabilité. Malgré toutes les difficultés, les Assyriens ont conservé leur religion chrétienne. Ils ont la réputation d'être courageux, disciplinés, loyaux, économes et travailleurs, et il n'y a, semble-t-il, aucune raison de croire qu'ils deviennent une charge sociale ou économique pour le Brésil s'ils y sont établis.

11. D'autre part (quoiqu'il soit nécessaire de n'entretenir le Gouvernement brésilien de ce point qu'avec la plus grande précaution et la plus grande discrétion), il faudra tenir compte du sentiment national qui s'est développé parmi les Assyriens en raison de la situation qu'ils ont occupée depuis longtemps et prendre les précautions appropriées. Il semble donc utile que je m'efforce d'expliquer, pour la gouverne de votre Excellence, quelle a été cette situation.

12. L'origine des Assyriens de l'Irak, dont il s'agit maintenant de régler l'avenir, n'est pas absolument claire, comme il ressort de l'extrait ci-joint du rapport soumis à la Société des Nations en 1925 par la Commission de Délimitation de la Frontière de Mossoul.<sup>(1)</sup> Toutefois, ils constituent, en réalité, une minorité religieuse plutôt qu'une minorité ethnique. Il serait plus exact de les désigner sous le nom de Nestoriens. En effet, quoique quelques-uns soient maintenant presbytériens de religion, ils appartiennent, en général, à la branche de la race assyro-chaldéenne qui constitue l'Eglise nestorienne. Il semble, toutefois, qu'ils se considèrent comme les descendants de l'ancien Empire assyrien, et cette revendication a jusqu'à présent imprimé un certain caractère nationaliste à leurs aspirations. La plupart d'entre eux sont primitivement venus de Turquie, où ils vivaient sous le régime dit des "millet." Sous ce régime, les sujets ottomans qui n'étaient pas mahométans étaient organisés en communautés religieuses dont l'existence était reconnue par le Gouvernement ottoman; ces communautés étaient dirigées par leurs chefs spirituels, sous la surveillance de la Sublime Porte. Les Assyriens ont conservé, sous ce régime, leur indépendance

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.



religieuse et ils étaient régis par leur législation synodique, qui était tolérée par le Gouvernement ottoman pour autant qu'elle n'était pas contraire aux lois de l'Empire. Leur Patriarche avait les mêmes droits, privilèges et dignités que les chefs des autres communautés non mahométanes, y compris le droit de juridiction exclusive sur les membres de la communauté en matière de statut personnel. En outre, le paiement du tribut dû au Sultan par les tribus exemptes des impôts ordinaires était versé par l'intermédiaire du Patriarche. Il semble donc que les Assyriens, comme les autres communautés de l'Empire ottoman, aient joui, en fait, d'une certaine autonomie dont l'étendue variait de temps à autre, mais qui contribua à maintenir un certain sentiment "national."

13. Il n'est donc pas surprenant de constater que dans l'Irak, où les Assyriens se sont réfugiés pendant et après la guerre, ils se soient également efforcés d'obtenir une certaine autonomie administrative. Vers la fin du régime du mandat, ils ont, en fait, présenté des revendications plus étendues et ont demandé la création d'une enclave autonome homogène. La Société des Nations, se rendant compte qu'une telle idée était difficilement conciliable avec l'organisation d'un Etat moderne unifié, ne s'est pas montrée favorable à cette idée et a finalement déclaré, dans une résolution adoptée le 15 décembre 1932 par le Conseil, que la demande en faveur d'une autonomie administrative à l'intérieur de l'Irak ne pouvait pas être acceptée.

14. Dans l'intervalle, la Société des Nations avait, toutefois, négocié avec le Gouvernement de l'Irak au sujet de certaines garanties destinées à sauvegarder, après la fin du régime du mandat, les aspirations culturelles, linguistiques et religieuses de toutes les minorités ethniques et religieuses de l'Irak en général, y compris les Assyriens. Ces garanties ont fait l'objet d'une déclaration formulée au nom de l'Irak le 30 mai 1932. Cette déclaration, dont copie est jointe, (\*) suivait les grandes lignes des traités ou déclarations de minorités antérieurement en vigueur entre certains pays et la Société des Nations.

15. Le danger existe, incontestablement, que les Assyriens, en raison de leur passé historique, s'attachent à l'idée d'une existence nationale séparée, alors que le comité estime que, si un plan prévoyant leur établissement dans un Etat moderne doit être couronné de succès, les Assyriens doivent être amenés à accepter l'idée de l'assimilation dans cet Etat.

16. Le comité a étudié longuement ce point et il doute que le problème puisse être réglé d'une façon satisfaisante si l'on ne résout pas la question du statut national futur des Assyriens. Le rapport du Général de Brigade Browne et ses communications antérieures font ressortir qu'au Brésil également on se rend pleinement compte de l'importance capitale de ce point et que des questions ont constamment été posées à ce sujet au Général Browne. En outre, d'après les rapports parvenus au comité, l'agitation contre l'immigration des Assyriens semble revêtir dans une large mesure un caractère nationaliste et paraît due à la crainte que les Assyriens ne restent un élément étranger et ne s'assimilent pas aisément aux habitants actuels du pays.

17. Le statut national actuel des Assyriens est assez obscur. Quelques-uns possèdent la nationalité irakienne; d'autres ne semblent pas avoir réuni les conditions nécessaires pour l'acquisition automatique de cette nationalité en vertu des dispositions du Traité de Lausanne et n'ont fait aucune démarche, depuis lors, pour obtenir cette nationalité par voie de naturalisation. Quel que soit l'aspect technique du problème, il n'est guère probable que le Gouvernement turc reconnaisse aussi tardivement comme ressortissants turcs les personnes appartenant à cette seconde catégorie et, pratiquement, celles-ci doivent donc être considérées, à l'heure actuelle, comme des réfugiés apatrides dans l'Irak. Il est naturellement impossible d'estimer dès à présent quelle proportion des Assyriens qui se décideront finalement à émigrer au Brésil rentrera dans cette catégorie. Mais les Assyriens apatrides sont précisément ceux qui n'ont jamais voulu s'établir en Irak dans les conditions actuelles, et il est donc extrêmement probable que ce sont eux qui montreront le plus d'empressement à saisir l'occasion de quitter ce pays.

18. Au Brésil, la situation semble être la suivante: tous les enfants nés au Brésil sont de nationalité brésilienne, même si leurs parents sont étrangers; les étrangers peuvent acquérir la nationalité brésilienne par voie de naturalisation au bout de deux ans de résidence dans le pays, ce délai étant supprimé si l'étranger

(\*) See Part XXX, p. 247.

en question possède des biens fonciers au Brésil ou a épousé une Brésilienne; si les conditions ci-dessus mentionnées sont toutes deux remplies, l'étranger est automatiquement considéré comme ressortissant brésilien de droit.

19. Tant que le statut national des Assyriens ne sera pas fixé, ils considéreront vraisemblablement leur nouvel établissement au Brésil comme une expérience purement temporaire et ils garderont au cœur la chimérique idée de conserver une existence nationale distincte. Il serait extrêmement regrettable qu'ils se rendissent au Brésil en se faisant des illusions sur ce point, et le meilleur moyen d'empêcher tout malentendu à ce sujet sera peut-être de prévoir dans le plan d'établissement une clause stipulant que les Assyriens acquerront la nationalité brésilienne le plus tôt possible.

20. La question se pose de savoir si l'acquisition de cette nouvelle nationalité doit être obligatoire ou facultative. Le comité ignore si le Gouvernement brésilien pourrait légalement abréger le délai dans lequel les Assyriens pourraient acquérir volontairement la nationalité brésilienne, et, en tout cas, il y a lieu de se demander si de simples facilités permettant d'acquérir volontairement la nationalité constitueraient une sauvegarde suffisante contre le danger prévu ci-dessus, étant donné qu'il n'existe aucune garantie que les Assyriens se prévaudraient de ces facilités.

21. En conséquence, quelque radicale que puisse sembler la proposition, le comité est enclin à penser que la méthode qui semble la mieux appropriée aux circonstances et la plus susceptible d'éviter les troubles futurs qui pourraient surgir de la survivance du sentiment national, est l'acquisition automatique de la nationalité brésilienne dès l'arrivée au Brésil. Il existe à cet égard une sorte de précédent—qui peut être cité à titre d'exemple—dans la convention entre la Turquie et la Grèce, signée à Lausanne le 30 janvier 1923, pour l'échange obligatoire des ressortissants turcs de religion grecque orthodoxe, établis sur les territoires turcs, et des ressortissants grecs de religion musulmane établis sur les territoires grecs. L'article 7 de cette convention stipulait ce qui suit: "Les émigrants perdront la nationalité du pays qu'ils abandonnent et ils acquerront celle du pays de destination, dès leur arrivée sur le territoire de ce pays." Une solution s'inspirant de ces principes pourrait présenter un avantage réel pour le Gouvernement brésilien, en ce sens qu'elle tendrait à éviter des inconvénients d'ordre administratif et à faciliter l'assimilation; or, en raison de la nature exceptionnelle du cas envisagé, cette procédure semblerait constituer une sage et utile garantie, car elle tendrait à assurer que seuls choisiraient de se rendre au Brésil les Assyriens disposés à s'y établir.

22. Les Assyriens pourraient évidemment prendre prétexte de cette solution pour repousser le projet brésilien dans son ensemble et leur attitude à cet égard dépendra de la manière dont cette solution leur sera exposée. Il est essentiel qu'on leur montre qu'il s'agit là d'un privilège que le Gouvernement brésilien a décidé de leur accorder. Dans l'idée du comité, le Gouvernement brésilien pourrait déclarer, que, compte tenu des circonstances spéciales du cas envisagé, il estime qu'il serait de l'intérêt de toutes les parties en cause que les Assyriens dès leur arrivée au Brésil vivent en citoyens brésiliens et que, par conséquent, le projet d'établissement devrait comprendre une disposition stipulant qu'ils acquerront la nationalité brésilienne dès leur arrivée dans le pays.

23. Peut-être le Gouvernement brésilien hésitera-t-il à adopter la solution proposée sans avoir pu s'assurer par lui-même que les Assyriens remplissent les conditions requises pour devenir citoyens brésiliens et il serait assez naturel qu'il proposât que l'acquisition de la nationalité brésilienne fût obligatoire, non pas immédiatement, mais au bout d'une certaine période, par exemple, d'un ou deux ans. Le comité, tout en reconnaissant la force d'une telle suggestion, ne pourrait s'y rallier si elle impliquait que le Gouvernement brésilien se réserve le droit, à l'expiration de ladite période, de refuser la nationalité brésilienne à l'un quelconque ou à tous les Assyriens et d'inviter les personnes auxquelles cette nationalité serait refusée à quitter immédiatement le Brésil. Cette solution risquerait de rouvrir toute la question du nouvel établissement des Assyriens à l'expiration de ladite période (qui serait vraisemblablement courte) et pourrait aboutir à de graves difficultés d'ordre pratique.

24. La solution proposée de l'acquisition automatique de la nationalité brésilienne dès l'arrivée au Brésil affectera essentiellement, si elle est adoptée, la troisième, tout au moins, des trois conditions fixées par le Gouvernement brésilien,



ainsi que la question du régime dont seront dotés les Assyriens aux points de vue civil et religieux, mentionnée au paragraphe 9 (2) ci-dessus.

25. Je passe maintenant à l'examen des trois conditions du Gouvernement brésilien.

26. En ce qui concerne la première de ces conditions le comité croit savoir que le Général de Brigade Browne a déjà expliqué aux autorités brésiennes que, si les Assyriens sont essentiellement des agriculteurs et des pasteurs qui, par tradition, aiment la terre et ont l'ambition de devenir propriétaires fonciers, un certain nombre d'entre eux se livrent à d'autres occupations. Le Général Browne a signalé que, dans de nombreux cas, ces occupations ont des rapports avec les métiers d'agriculteur et de pasteur et que ceux qui s'adonnent à d'autres occupations pourraient être utilement employés au développement de l'établissement proposé, sans porter préjudice au marché de la main-d'œuvre nationale. On peut même souligner que ce marché tirera probablement profit de l'établissement d'une population de l'importance numérique envisagée. Il faut donc espérer que cette condition ne soulèvera aucune difficulté, dans la pratique, et que le Gouvernement brésilien ne l'interprétera pas d'une manière tellement stricte qu'elle devienne un obstacle à l'immigration en masse des Assyriens.

27. En ce qui concerne la deuxième condition, le comité n'a jamais envisagé que les Assyriens devaient constituer une charge financière pour le Gouvernement brésilien. Les méthodes par lesquelles l'établissement sera financé ne pourront être arrêtées dans le détail que lorsque le coût de cette entreprise sera plus exactement connu, c'est-à-dire lorsqu'un plan concret aura été présenté aux Assyriens et qu'on aura déterminé le nombre exact de ceux qui désirent en profiter. Vous observerez, en prenant connaissance des débats du Conseil du 19 janvier dernier dont vous trouverez copie ci-jointe,<sup>(\*)</sup> que, pour les dépenses qui ne sont pas couvertes par le Gouvernement de l'Irak et par les Assyriens eux-mêmes, le Conseil a adressé un appel à la générosité des Gouvernements et des organisations privées pour leur demander d'étudier la question de leur participation financière, en égard à l'aspect humanitaire du projet. Il n'entre pas dans les intentions du comité de demander au Gouvernement brésilien d'apporter sa contribution financière. Toutefois, le comité croit savoir que, dans le passé, le Gouvernement brésilien a eu l'habitude de faciliter l'immigration en assurant, dans une certaine mesure, la gratuité du transport par chemin de fer. Si le Gouvernement brésilien croyait pouvoir accorder des facilités analogues pour le transport des Assyriens, le comité lui en serait naturellement très reconnaissant.

28. C'est la troisième des conditions posées par le Brésil qui suscite le plus grand problème. Le comité apprécie pleinement les considérations de prudence qui l'ont dictée, mais il voit de graves difficultés qui s'opposent à sa réalisation satisfaisante. En premier lieu, la responsabilité qui, en vertu de cette condition, incomberait à la Paraná Plantations Limited est d'une nature telle que cette société ne saurait l'accepter et que la Société des Nations ne saurait guère l'assumer elle-même sans avoir au préalable la certitude qu'un autre pays serait disposé à recevoir ceux des Assyriens qui ne s'établiraient pas définitivement au Brésil et sans que des dispositions satisfaisantes aient été prises pour faire face aux dépenses éventuelles que nécessiterait leur nouvelle installation dans un autre pays. Abstraction faite de ces graves objections d'ordre pratique, cette condition ne manquerait guère de produire sur les Assyriens un effet psychologique regrettable. Elle les inciterait à se considérer comme des colons purement temporaires et les découragerait de tout effort en vue de surmonter les difficultés qu'en leur qualité de pionniers, ils ne sauraient manquer de rencontrer dans une certaine mesure. Depuis que cette condition a été posée, le risque qu'entrevoit le Gouvernement brésilien s'est révélé moindre à la suite des investigations faites par le Brigadier Browne, qui ont montré que le plan offrait de bonnes perspectives de succès. Ce risque serait diminué encore davantage par l'adoption de la solution suggérée plus haut pour la question du statut national. En effet, si cette suggestion était adoptée, la troisième condition cesserait probablement d'avoir sa raison d'être et serait abandonnée. En tout état de cause, le comité estime que tous les efforts possibles devraient être faits pour agir dans ce sens, étant donné qu'en raison des complications sur lesquelles j'ai attiré l'attention, il n'est pas enclin à entreprendre les mesures nécessaires pour remplir cette

(\*) See No. 115.

condition sans avoir acquis du moins la conviction qu'il n'existe aucune autre solution plus pratique.

29. En ce qui concerne le régime des Assyriens en matière civile et religieuse, il ne saurait être naturellement question, au Brésil, d'un traité de minorité ou de tout instrument qui encouragerait les Assyriens à espérer le maintien au Brésil de l'ancien système turc des "millet" ou le renouvellement de la situation à laquelle ils se sont accoutumés en Irak. Comme je l'ai déjà signalé, le comité estime que le succès du projet dépendra de la mesure dans laquelle les Assyriens s'assimileront dans l'Etat qui les recevra. Il est évident qu'ils ne peuvent espérer jouir d'une situation privilégiée dans tout Etat moderne qui leur offre un foyer, et ils doivent être disposés à obéir aux lois nationales, exactement comme les autres résidents du pays. En cherchant à obtenir des renseignements quant au régime dont jouiront les Assyriens, le comité n'a donc nullement l'intention de demander des privilèges spéciaux. Il désire simplement s'assurer de la nature du régime qui sera, en pratique, accordé aux Assyriens et il désire obtenir, de source sûre, tous les renseignements disponibles qui peuvent être communiqués aux Assyriens de manière que ceux-ci puissent se décider en connaissant exactement les droits et les obligations qui seront les leurs en tant que résidents au Brésil.

30. Ce qui est d'une importance primordiale, c'est d'établir que les Assyriens, qu'ils deviennent ou non ressortissants brésiliens, auront toute liberté pour pratiquer leur religion et gérer leurs affaires religieuses dans la mesure compatible avec le maintien de l'autorité du Gouvernement. Au surplus, si les Assyriens doivent devenir immédiatement ressortissants brésiliens, le comité sera heureux de savoir dans quelle mesure ils seront encore autorisés à se servir de leur langue maternelle et à diriger des écoles privées. Si, d'autre part, la question du statut national doit demeurer en suspens, il est souhaitable qu'une communication émanant d'une source autorisée fasse connaître si les Assyriens, jusqu'au moment où ils acquerront la nationalité brésilienne, peuvent être assurés d'être traités comme les ressortissants du pays en matière de protection de la vie et des biens (y compris le libre accès aux tribunaux), d'instruction publique, d'imposition et de prévoyance sociale.

31. Le comité est certain que les lois actuelles du Brésil donnent des assurances suffisantes sur tous ces points. Il a, notamment, pris acte des dispositions libérales de l'article 72 de la Constitution brésilienne, amendé le 3 septembre 1926. Toutefois, le comité croit savoir qu'une nouvelle Constitution est à présent en cours de discussion et il désire simplement obtenir des renseignements précis et sûrs au sujet de la pratique actuellement suivie ou des intentions du Gouvernement brésilien en ce qui concerne les points que j'ai mentionnés.

32. Par la suite se posera la question de la forme du document où figureront les résultats des négociations avec le Gouvernement brésilien; sera-ce un accord bilatéral ou un échange de notes entre le Brésil et la Société des Nations ou une sorte de déclaration unilatérale du Gouvernement brésilien où seront exposés en détails les conditions auxquelles le Gouvernement brésilien acceptera les Assyriens ainsi que le statut dont les Assyriens peuvent espérer bénéficier? Au stade actuel des négociations, cette question de forme semble prématurée.

33. En outre, il est possible qu'un accord bilatéral entre le Brésil et l'Irak devienne en définitive nécessaire, par exemple au sujet du point particulier de la nationalité, si la solution ci-dessus proposée par le comité est adoptée; mais cette question pourra de même être examinée ultérieurement.

34. Je ne me propose pas, dans la présente communication, de m'arrêter au point (3), mentionné au paragraphe 9 ci-dessus, à savoir les détails matériels de l'établissement, puisque le comité doit, dans une très large mesure, s'en remettre à l'opinion du Général Browne et du Major Johnson en ce qui concerne les questions techniques de cette nature. Les indications complémentaires qui pourront être nécessaires seront donc envoyées à votre Excellence aussitôt que possible après le retour de la mission à Genève.

35. J'espère que la présente communication aura fourni à votre Excellence une documentation suffisante pour les conversations préliminaires non officielles qu'envisage le comité. Celui-ci sera naturellement heureux de fournir, si possible, à votre Excellence toutes les autres informations ou indications que vous pourriez désirer. Je tiens à répéter que le comité, pour le moment, envisage uniquement des conversations préalables d'un caractère tout à fait confidentiel



et sans engagement d'aucune sorte. Le comité n'a pas l'intention de donner aucune publicité au fait que vous êtes engagé dans ces conversations ou même que la présente communication vous a été adressée, et il présume que, de votre côté, vous prendrez également toutes les précautions possibles pour assurer que toute publicité sera évitée, au Brésil. En adoptant cette procédure, le comité s'est efforcé de donner effet à l'avis que contenait le télégramme de votre Excellence en date du 29 mars. Il vous prie de bien vouloir l'informer, de préférence par télégramme, lorsque vous considérerez que le moment est venu de prendre des mesures plus précises ou de caractère plus officiel. Il va sans dire que tous les renseignements que vous croirez pouvoir entre-temps adresser au comité, en ce qui concerne les progrès réalisés et les perspectives de règlement, seront reçus par lui avec reconnaissance.

36. Le comité se rend pleinement compte de l'amplitude et de la difficulté de la tâche qu'il prie votre Excellence de bien vouloir entreprendre. Il est naturel que le Gouvernement brésilien n'aborde la question de l'immigration d'un grand nombre de personnes appartenant à une race éloignée et peu connue qu'en s'entourant de grandes précautions, mais le comité est persuadé que votre Excellence saisira toutes les occasions pour souligner auprès du Gouvernement brésilien le côté humanitaire de la question. Quelques fautes qu'aient pu commettre les Assyriens, la cruauté du sort qui les a poursuivis depuis le début de la guerre mondiale les rend dignes de sympathie. En leur donnant la possibilité de refaire leur vie dans un nouveau foyer, parmi des habitants qui sont chrétiens comme eux, le Gouvernement brésilien agira dans l'esprit des traditions les plus libérales et rendra un réel service à l'entente et à la paix internationales.

Veuillez agréer, &c.  
LÓPEZ OLIVAN.

[E 2598/16/93]

No. 134.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received April 26.)*

(No. 195.)  
Sir,

Bagdad, April 12, 1934.

I HAVE the honour to report, with reference to my despatch of the 12th January last, No. 28, that the present Government is taking a different attitude towards the question of a foreign loan from that adopted by its predecessor, and official intimation has now been sent to Messrs. Baring Brothers and Co. to the effect that the Government estimates that its programme of works can be carried out from its own resources, and has therefore postponed for the time being any further consideration of the question of taking up a loan.

2. The recent speeches of the Opposition leaders in the Chamber of Deputies have strongly and adversely criticised a foreign loan policy as being dangerous in principle. This view has met with some support, and the Government does not feel strong enough to oppose it. The Minister of Finance has stated in the course of the debates on the budget estimates in Parliament that the Government does not intend to have recourse to foreign capital.

3. The life of the present Government is precarious, and it is quite possible that it may fall before long, when their successors might take a more courageous view of the situation. It is, however, quite definite that loan proposals are for the present in complete abeyance.

4. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &c.  
F. H. HUMPHRYS.

[E 2602/1/93]

No. 135.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

*Final Report of the Commission appointed to examine Proposals for the Settlement of Assyrians in Brazil.—(Communicated by the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, April 27, 1934; Received in Foreign Office, April 30.)*

THE two members of the commission, Brigadier-General J. Gilbert Browne, C.M.G., C.B.E., D.S.O., and Mr. T. F. Johnson, secretary-general of the Nansen International Office, left Southampton by R.M.L. *Almanzora* on Saturday, the 27th January, and arrived at Rio de Janeiro on the 12th February, where they were met by the third member, M. Charles Redard, counsellor of the Swiss Legation. This made the commission complete.

M. Pedro Marques, of the Ministry of Labour, M. de Silva, sent by the British Ambassador to help the commission, and also Mr. A. H. M. Thomas, local director of Paraná Plantations (Limited), met the commission at the boat. The commission took up its quarters at the Copacabana Palace Hotel for a few days.

News had already been received that a press campaign against the Assyrian immigration had been started in Brazil. The chief agents were a society called the "Friends of Alberto Torres Society."

There appears to be, as far as the commission can gather, a movement against the arrival in the country of any more people of Asiatic race. A great many of the articles in the press were extremely ill-informed, and some of the illustrations which appeared were not of Assyrians at all.

The commission therefore, in a consultation at Petropolis with the British Ambassador, Sir William Seeds, K.C.M.G., and the Spanish Ambassador, Dr. Sales, on the 13th February, came to three decisions:—

First of all, on no account to enter into a counter-campaign in the press.

Secondly, to interview such of the Brazilian Government officials who would be concerned with matters connected with immigration; and, thirdly, to make out for the personal information of such officials a short aide-mémoire on the Assyrians.

As regards the press, the commission decided to meet the press if an interview was asked for, but to be very guarded in what they said.

Owing to the carnival, few official contacts could be made until after Wednesday, the 14th February. Arrangements were made, however, by Dr. Sales for such visits as feasible to Government officials, and for the commission to call on the President of Brazil in the near future.

The commission called on the Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce, Dr. Joaquim Pedro Salgado Filho, being met there by Dr. Sales and Sr. Marques of the Labour Ministry; Dr. Piraja, of the Department of Colonisation, was also present.

The matter of the Assyrians was discussed; the characteristics and history of those people explained, and some photographs of them shown to the Minister and interested officials.

A copy of the aide-mémoire was sent to the Ministers.

In the paper of the morning of the 15th February it was reported that the "Friends of Alberto Torres Society" had approached the Minister of Labour to enlist his sympathy against the Assyrian immigration.

The commission, accompanied by Dr. Sales, visited the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Cavalcanti de Lacerda, and explained all the points about the Assyrian people. He was given a copy of the aide-mémoire, and was shown photographs of the people, and seemed well satisfied with the type shown.

On the 16th February the commission were received by Dr. Bandeira de Mello, at one time Brazilian delegate to the League Assembly, and for many years delegate of the Brazilian Government at the International Labour Conference, and now one of the directors of the Ministry of Labour.



The commission also had an interview with Colonel Fonseca, secretary to the President, to ask him to thank the President for his having decided favourably on the Assyrian immigration.

The commission, accompanied by Mr. A. H. M. Thomas, left in the evening for São Paulo, arrived on the morning of the 17th February, and put up at the Esplanada Hotel. Pressmen arrived at once for interviews.

It was known that there was a small Assyrian community in São Paulo, and the commission invited their representatives to a conversation.

Three Assyrians came to the hotel in response to that invitation. One had never been in the Assyrian country; the other two had left their country some four or five years ago, and were owners of small shops in São Paulo.

Two were against their people coming to Brazil, because, to use their own words, "Our people, if they come, will die out as a nation." They could, however, produce no other solution. They seemed to be frightened of the press campaign, and thought that they might suffer if it continued.

It is quite possible that the members of this community may try and persuade their people now in Iraq not to come to Brazil.

From now on the commission began to receive offers from landowners, or their agents.

Although the commission was sent out with the principal object of reporting on the offers of Paraná Plantations (Limited), it considered it impossible to ignore other proposals which might effect economies.

It did not, however, commit itself in any other way. An offer was acknowledged, and the applicant was told that it would be considered, the commission being one of enquiry only, and not empowered to promise or decide anything.

As a matter of fact the majority could be dismissed after a short examination as unsuitable for various obvious reasons.

One question requiring the closest examination in Brazil is that of title deeds, which the commission had neither the means nor the time to examine thoroughly in every case.

To keep in touch with the press agitation while the commission was away in the proposed settlement area, a press-cutting agency was instructed to collect from the papers all references to the Assyrian settlement scheme.

The commission occupied Sunday, the 18th February, in interviews with pressmen and people with land for sale, and left São Paulo at 7 p.m., arriving at Londrina at 5 p.m. on the 19th February, and established headquarters at the Hotel Luxemburgo.

Tuesday, the 20th February, was spent in inspecting areas where colonists are already settled, and noting the degree of prosperity which can be reached by a new settler, especially one coming to the country with little or nothing at all.

Hence the extremely well-run places of two or three years' standing were not of such interest to the commission as those which had been in existence for a shorter period, except to show what this land produces in quantity and quality.

The places visited by the commission confirmed substantially the opinion formed by M. Charles Redard, in his report of June 1932 in which he says that "the success of the scheme depends on the colonists themselves," since the country is most favourable to settlers, and the settlement schemes well run.

As a general rule it was found that a colonist taking on a completely new piece of ground should obtain from his own plantings:—

Vegetables in two months.  
Beans in two and a half months.  
Rice in five months.  
Maize in four months.  
Manioc in four and a half months.

Taking the average of the settlers, a settler should become self-supporting in eight months, and should pay up all instalments due to the company in five years.

The commission next visited the hospital in Londrina, and saw there Dr. Müller who has medical charge of the area.

Generally the area is healthy, but there is malaria on the larger rivers, such as the Tibagy and Ivahy, and also in Jatahy village.

If an area has malaria, the argument is that the malarial mosquito (anopheles) must be there. If Assyrians who are malarial subjects go to the area and are bitten by that mosquito they will spread the disease.

Dr. Müller explained that there were four cases of malaria in the area; two which had come up from Santa Catharina were cases of relapse; two others had developed in the Londrina area. This indicated the existence of the anopheles mosquito.

However, during the whole of their time in the area, which included seven nights camped in the forest in the rainy season, no single specimen of the anopheles was recognised, although the commission slept without mosquito nets.

The list of diseases in the area was examined and gave quite a favourable impression. As soon as arrangements are made for the Assyrians to come, a small hospital should be established in the area with a doctor in charge. Dressers and orderlies may be available from the old levy personnel of the levy hospital and pack ambulance.

Statistics of the climate and rainfall are attached.<sup>(1)</sup> It appeared to the commission that, while there were not the great extremes of heat and cold as in Iraq, there was sufficient change of temperature to make life healthy.

From the rain charts and information gathered later from the water distribution of the country, there is no danger of droughts.

On Wednesday, the 21st February, the commission left Londrina for the area proposed for Assyrian settlement. The first 33 kilom. were done by car, and then 21 kilom. by mule through forest tracks to a camp formed there, taking five and a half hours.

Next day, the 22nd February, they marched again by mule, again through the forest tracks, and reached a camp 13 kilom. inside the area proposed for Assyrian settlement. They did not ride straight to the camp, but made several deviations to points within the area, to try to get views over it in order to form an idea of the country.

After reaching the camp area two more short expeditions were made to points within the area; eight and a half hours being spent in all on these reconnaissances and the march.

The view was very restricted, generally being limited to the next turning in the forest path and a few yards to right and left.

In some places, however, a view of as much as a mile could be obtained, when, on the top of a ridge, the ground fell rapidly. In other places, particularly where there were good streams, the local people, called "caboclos," had cleared areas and planted their own crops, and these areas were continuous in some cases for about half or three-quarters of a mile.

Next day, the 23rd February, the commission went across the area, south of the line already traversed, and 3 to 5 kilom. from it.

They were able to follow tracks cut by the caboclos and their clearings until the eastern edge of the clearing was reached.

From here they followed the track called the Boiadera, along the border of the area proposed for Assyrian settlement, as long as time would permit, going south.

They returned to the first camp in the forest, having been out for nine and a half hours and covered 40 kilom., all of which, except 3 kilom., were within the area selected for Assyrian settlement.

Next day, the 24th February, the commission returned to Londrina. They had covered 46½ kilom. within the area designated for the settlement of the Assyrians, without counting ground gone over twice, and had got a certain number of views of the country, and so were able to say that the country seen differed in no way from the areas already settled on in Londrina area, where the results were so good.

There was no difficulty, of course, in forming an opinion on the ground over which the commission had ridden or walked; but, regarding other parts of the area, they had, in the case where only views could be got, to take the experienced opinion of local people who knew the vegetation and what country that vegetation covered.

Further information came from reports of survey parties who had been round the edges of the area, or from a hunter who had been into the forest with which the area was covered.

(1) Not printed.



The only other method of examining the area fully would have been to have paths cut through it, taking time and costing money.

Having in view, therefore, that it was necessary to get their preliminary report off without loss of time, the commission carried out the examination as reported above, and, since sending in that report, a second visit, which took them into and beyond the area, confirms the opinion of the commission.

The commission occupied the 25th February in visiting the Japanese settlements, and the 26th and 27th in visiting Italian, German and Polish settlements.

The most interesting points gathered on these visits were the cases which showed how quickly a colonist who comes out and really works can make good.

The most interesting were the two young brothers Ratke, a married couple called Gaiser, and a single man called Fraeger; all of which bore out the above statement and the report of M. Redard of June 1932.

On the morning of the 27th February the commission had a conference at the Luxemberg Hotel, Londrina, and, after a discussion of the *questionnaire*, decided that enough data had been collected to send in a preliminary telegraphic report; the form of the report was decided on and made out.

It was necessary to see the British and Spanish Ambassadors and to inform them of what the commission had done and what it intended to do next before sending the report off.

It had also to be sent in code, for certain reasons.

The commission also wished to consult the British and Spanish Ambassadors about the press campaign and to ask if any counter-propaganda was desirable.

They decided therefore to return to Rio de Janeiro at once and send off the following telegrams:—

- (a) A preliminary telegram to the League to say they were going to Rio de Janeiro and that the telegraphic report on the work done would be sent from there.
- (b) To Sr. Cavalcanti de Lacerda to say that the commission was returning to Rio de Janeiro for a few days only and would like an audience with the President.
- (c) To the Spanish Ambassador the same as above (b).
- (d) The above (b) repeated to the British Ambassador.
- (e) To Dr. Alfonso Bandeira de Mello, telling him of the proposed arrival of the commission.

Before leaving Londrina the commission inspected the death register; there having been eighty-two deaths since the formation of Londrina. Of these twenty-eight were children, the cause being mainly mal-nutrition.

Certain points as regards the health of the country and division of the land were discussed by the commission with Mr. Thomas.

The advisability of forming a railhead reception camp, to which the Assyrians could go from Jatahy, near the Tibagy River, was discussed, because of the reputation of that river for malaria.

Mr. Thomas pointed out that the camp on top of the hill will put the Assyrians out of reach of malaria.

Still, the commission feel that if the Assyrians can be transported from the region of the Tibagy River without delay it will be better.

Mr. Thomas also suggested a scheme for putting a certain number of families together in the clearings, so that they can look after one another while learning how to fit themselves to go on the land.

Another point brought up by the commission was whether an Assyrian family could be settled on a smaller piece of ground to save expense. Four *alqueires* was suggested instead of 5.

Mr. Thomas explained that experience showed that the 5-*alqueire* block was the most convenient minimum.

The system is to let each settler have one side of his frontage on a stream. The general run of the country is in small undulations divided by streams, and the 5-*alqueire* block fits into the country. Anything smaller would give the settler a long narrow strip, very inconvenient for all reasons.

The commission left Londrina on the 28th February and reached São Paulo next day.

The commission left that night and arrived at Rio de Janeiro on the 2nd March, Friday.

Dr. Cavalcanti de Lacerda, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, met the commission in the Copacabana Palace Hotel.

In his opinion the commission should give some answer to the campaign against the Assyrian settlement, which was continuing in the press and seemed to be unanswered by anyone.

Dr. Sales, the Spanish Ambassador, met the commission at the hotel, and that afternoon the whole commission, accompanied by Dr. Sales, went up to Petropolis to see the British Ambassador.

The proposed telegram from the commission to Geneva was read and, for reasons explained in my confidential letter to the Secretary-General, dated the 3rd March, was sent in code through the British Ambassador.

On Saturday, the 3rd March, the commission, accompanied by Mr. Thomas, interviewed Sr. Ribas, the Interventor of Paraná. He was given a copy of the *aide-mémoire*.

Two Assyrians, who live in Rio de Janeiro, came in the morning to the commission, very much disturbed at the press campaign.

Both were well-to-do men, who had been away from their country for many years. They did not, however, like the party at São Paulo, protest against the coming of their people to Brazil.

In the evening the commission interviewed one Dr. de Souza Araujo, a medical specialist on leprosy, who, on the strength of having travelled from Basra to Bagdad and thence to Damascus, had written an article to the papers against the immigration of the Assyrians.

It seemed that he drew most of his information from encyclopedias and other works, and has not, as far as the commission could judge, seen the Assyrians in Iraq and knew practically nothing about them.

In the course of conversation with the doctor it seemed very evident to the commission that there is a party formed in Brazil against all Asiatic immigration. It is an unfortunate occurrence that the Assyrians have come into such undue prominence.

He made a very strong point that there should be a most careful examination of the Assyrians by a committee before they came to Brazil. The commission were, of course, unable to commit themselves on this point.

On Monday, the 5th March, the commission visited the office of the Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce, and saw there Dr. Vital and Dr. Pedro Marques of that Ministry, and Dr. Pirajá, of the Department of Colonisation.

No one seemed very much opposed to the immigration, but no one committed himself to any opinion.

A press correspondent, Mr. Aspinall (Reuter's agent), called and asked several questions about the Assyrians that evening.

On Tuesday, the 6th March, the commission interviewed two of the Paraná Deputies, General Plinio Tourinho and Dr. Machado Lima, and answered questions put to them concerning the Assyrians.

M. Redard went to see the secretary of the Friends of Alberto Torres Society in the afternoon. He found him in a very excited state, and not inclined to listen to anything. This is the society who are very active in all the anti-Assyrian agitation.

The commission left in the evening for São Paulo. Just before leaving, a telegram was put into the room of one of the commission from the Friends of Alberto Torres. It appeared next day in the newspapers.

The attention of the commission was drawn to an announcement in the papers, which appeared among the cuttings, that Dr. Arlindo Carneiro was offering some land for the settlement of the Assyrians north of São Paulo. As this seemed likely to be a saving in expense, the commission have instituted enquiries into the matter.

A further offer of land was received in São Paulo from Sr. Vaz de Oliveira. His offer was received as in other cases, only he was asked to furnish some information in case of its being of use.

The commission left São Paulo that evening, arriving at Londrina on the 8th March; Sr. Rossi, an operator with a filming apparatus, accompanied them this time.

Next day the commission visited the Japanese settlements, the German ones at Heimtal and the Czech and Novo Vlast for filming. That evening came the cable from the Committee for the Settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq from



Geneva, asking for the supplementary report. This was made out next day and sent off later by air mail.

On Sunday, the 11th March, the commission left Londrina to inspect another area, 18 kilom. from the first one seen, for the purpose of settling the Assyrians.

Mr. Thomas had already had cutting parties out to enable the commission to penetrate into the area as far as possible.

The commission arrived in the middle of the first area, 69 kilom. from Londrina, on the evening of the 11th March, and spent the next day, the 12th March, in a reconnaissance into the new area.

They divided into two parties for the purpose and were out for eleven and a half hours. Having seen what could be seen by means of new-cut tracks, and by getting views over it from several points, the commission were able to say with practical certainty that the area was similar in all respects to the first one, the area already colonised.

Films of the area for Assyrian settlement were taken, as well as views on the road and in the forest.

On Tuesday, the 13th March, the commission returned to Londrina.

The 14th was occupied in filming certain of the settled areas near Londrina and on the railway, which is rapidly approaching that place.

On the 15th March the commission left Londrina, arriving at São Paulo on the 16th.

The supplementary report was sent off, with copy of a preliminary report by Mr. Johnson to the Nansen Office, on the technical, administrative and financial aspects of the proposed settlement scheme attached to it. A copy of his full report forms Appendix X.<sup>(1)</sup>

By request of the British Ambassador copies of the supplementary report were sent to him and to the Spanish Ambassador.

The commission left the same evening for Jangada, the settlement of Paraná Plantations (Limited), in North-West São Paulo, and arrived at Biriguy next afternoon, the 17th March.

They went at once to Guatambú and inspected the lands of the Paraná Plantations (Limited) there. Here there is room for 375 families. The commission returned to Biriguy that night.

The next day, the 18th March, the commission inspected the area proposed for Assyrian settlement in Jangada, going by car as far as the Rio Feio, which forms the southern boundary of the area. This area consists of 7,000 alqueires of land.

On Monday, the 19th March, the commission left Biriguy, arriving at São Paulo on Tuesday, the 20th March.

The 21st and the 22nd March were spent in going over the work done, and making a comparison of the Londrina and Jangada areas.

The commission decided to recommend that the position of the two areas of settlement should be in the lands held by the Paraná Plantations (Limited), near Londrina, and a telegram was drafted on those lines and sent through the British consul-general at São Paulo.

On the 23rd March the commission visited Santos with the object of looking at the place where the Assyrian immigrants would land and be entrained. They returned that evening to São Paulo.

On the 24th March the commission inspected the title-deeds of the Paraná Plantations (Limited), which Mr. Thomas kindly produced at their request, and all was found in order so far as the commission could judge.

On the 26th March they left São Paulo, arriving at Rio de Janeiro next day.

This completed the work of the commission for which they were sent out.

#### *Conclusions of the Commission.*

In coming to their conclusions the commission followed closely the points in the *questionnaire*, and from what they have seen their opinion is as follows:—

##### *I.—Climate.*

*Temperature (a) (b).*—That the temperature, while not running to violent extremes as in Iraq to which the Assyrians are accustomed, yet has a sufficient variation to be healthy.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

*Rainfall.*—That the rainfall is more than in Iraq, and ensures that there are no droughts.

##### *II.—Cultivation (details in Appendix IV<sup>(1)</sup>).*

That the crops most easily cultivated in Paraná can be cultivated by the Assyrians.

##### *III.—Cattle and Sheep Raising and Pig Breeding.*

That a certain number of Assyrians have experience of cattle raising.

That practically the whole of the nation are well acquainted with sheep and goat raising.

That, so far in Londrina area, sheep raising has only been tried to a limited extent; but that goats are plentiful and do well.

That the Assyrians should find no difficulty in pig breeding.

##### *IV.—Agricultural Settlement Conditions.*

(1) That it is quite possible to start with village centres. This applies especially to the area in which the Patriarch will be located.

(2) That 5 alqueires per family are sufficient in the first instance. Settlers, as they become more efficient and affluent, may extend their area. Any smaller amount than 5 alqueires, in the first instance, is not advisable.

(3) That a settler who already works should become self-supporting on his land in eight months.

That he should be able to pay off his instalments, and become self-supporting in five years; but for the Assyrians this should be extended to eight years, and, if transport included, eventually twelve years (see preliminary report, paragraph 6 (b) and II).

(4) This is quite possible. Report in full at the end of this report.

##### *V.—Other Occupations.*

That the first endeavour will be to put settlers on the land irrespective of abilities in other directions.

That they will first be occupied in gangs under instructors in clearing, road-making, house building and planting.

That when on their own land an instructional labourer will go round and show them the use of machinery, how to situate farm buildings and how to deal with water.

(NOTE.—The latter is probably not necessary for the Assyrians.)

That then outside employment will take place as men show themselves adapted for it, or as they have leisure to do it.

##### *VI.—Food.*

That until the Assyrians are getting food from their own lands their food requirements will be supplied by the Nansen Office and can be satisfied at reasonable prices.

##### *VII.—Medical Attention.*

That satisfactory arrangements for medical attention can be made.

That the general health throughout the area is satisfactory.

##### *VIII.—Religion.*

That there is complete religious freedom throughout the country.

##### *IX.—Schools.*

That Assyrian schools should be established in the area, under arrangements between the Nansen Office and the Patriarch.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.



That Portuguese must be taught in those schools.

The commission went carefully into the matter of paragraph IV (4). Bearing in mind the differences which at present separate the Assyrians, the commission investigated the means of settlement, which gave three possibilities:—

- (1) If it is decided to settle the Assyrians in one block, they can be settled in the first area inspected, 66 kilom. south-west of Londrina.
- (2) If it is decided to settle them in two parties (for reasons given in confidential supplement to this report), then one party, preferably that which follows the Patriarch, should be settled in the first area, 66 kilom. south-west of Londrina, and the other either—

(a) Also in the area south-west of Londrina, but 18 kilom. further west than the first party, and separated by 18 kilom. of virgin forest; or

(b) In the lands held by Paraná Plantations, called Jangada, 250 kilom. in a straight line north of the first party, or four days by rail and road.

Having carefully considered all these points the commission came to these conclusions—

- (a) That the differences of opinion which at present divide the Assyrians into two parties while in Iraq will tend to disappear once they leave the country. They may not vanish at once, of course, but will in time. Then the people will naturally come together.
- (b) That, even though one party disagrees with the present policy of the Patriarch, they have never abjured him as head of their people.
- (c) That the Londrina settlement area is on the whole a better settlement area than the Jangada area.
- (d) That the expense of settling the Assyrians in the Londrina and Jangada areas will be much more than a settlement in one area only.

Therefore the commission are of the opinion that the settlement should be in two parties in the area south of Londrina, separated by the 18 kilom. of forest.

J. GILBERT BROWNE, *Brigadier-General*.

CHS. REDARD.

T. F. JOHNSON.

(Confidential.)

*Addenda to the Report of the Commission.*

In making the first telegraphic report on their return to Rio de Janeiro the commission decided that this report should be sent in code for two reasons:—

- (a) The press campaign was very violent against the settlement, and part of the reason of this campaign was to attack the Government in some way—and this was one.

Therefore, if sent in any way except code, it might accentuate the press campaign and embarrass the President and the Brazilian Government.

- (b) If the commission reported personally on the possibilities of settlement and the Brazilian Government then decided it would not accept the Assyrians, the commission felt this might be derogatory to the League of Nations.

2. The reason for the visit to Santos of the commission was partly due to the suggestion that there might be a demonstration against the Assyrians on arrival there, and to see how trouble could be avoided.

3. The reports from Iraq are that there is a very definite cleavage between the Assyrians. There are two parties—

- (a) Those who follow the Patriarch Mar Shimun implicitly, and
- (b) Those who, while still venerating him as Patriarch and head of their people, do not agree with his policy.

The differences between the two parties in paragraph (b) are whether the Assyrians shall accept the settlement policy of the Iraq Government or not; the Patriarch and those who follow him having set their faces definitely against it, while the other party propose to accept it. In addition there is a certain tribal jealousy which has been present for a very long time.

J. GILBERT BROWNE, *Brigadier-General*.

CHS. REDARD.

T. F. JOHNSON.

[E 2701/2701/93]

No. 136.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 1.)*

(No. 214.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, April 18, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to report that King Ghazi left Bagdad early on Monday, the 9th April, for a tour of the southern provinces. His Majesty was accompanied by the Amir Abdul Illah, eldest son of King Ali, Jamil Beg Al Madfal, the Prime Minister and Acting Minister of the Interior, and Tahsin Beg Qadri, the Master of Ceremonies.

2. The King first visited Kerbela and Najaf, where, in the company of a large gathering of divines and notables, he visited the holy shrines. During the final preparations for the tour some doubt had been expressed regarding the advisability of a formal visit to these two holy cities, where, as is usual at this time of the year, Shiah propaganda is again rife and some unrest noticeable. The possibility of awkward situations arising was, however, avoided by the arrival of the King at a time other than that announced and his reception seems to have left nothing to be desired.

3. On the following day the Royal party motored from Najaf, via Kufa, to Hillah and entrained for Diwaniyah, where people gathered from a wide area and the town was suitably decorated for enthusiastic demonstrations. *En route* His Majesty received a popular welcome at the principal stations at which his special train stopped.

4. On the morning of the 11th April, His Majesty continued on his way southwards by train to Ur, whence he proceeded by motor car to Nasiriyah and entered the town accompanied by over 600 galloping tribal horsemen.

5. The next day King Ghazi travelled by train to Basra, where his welcome was no less enthusiastic than it had been at Nasiriyah. On the 13th April he embarked on the port inspection ship *Nearchus* for a two-day cruise down the Shatt-el-Arab to the head of the Persian Gulf. When passing the mouth of the River Karun His Majesty was given a salute of twenty-one guns by one of the Persian gun-boats stationed there. At Fao he inspected the dredging operations at the bar.

6. His Majesty returned to Bagdad by train, arriving on the morning of the 17th, and expressed himself to me as extremely gratified by the welcome which he received.

7. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.



*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 8.)*

(No. 217.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, April 21, 1934.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 195 of the 12th April last, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a revised draft law for expenditure on capital works by the Iraqi Government.

2. This draft law represents a new attempt at a Five-Year Plan and is intended to supersede the existing law for the development of capital works, which, with most of its programme yet unfulfilled, has still two years to run.

3. The scheme revealed in the draft is similar in some respects to that described in my despatch of the 12th January last, No. 28, with the important difference that expenditure is to be confined to the receipts from the royalty payments from oil companies, in pursuance of the policy of financing the expenditure wholly from Government revenues without recourse to a foreign loan. In an endeavour to make this policy effective the total expenditure has been reduced from £5,100,000 (spread over four years) to £3,987,000 (spread over five years). The amount which Nuri Pasha proposed to allocate in his provisional programme for payment to His Majesty's Government for the buildings to be taken over at the Hinaidi and Mosul cantonments does not appear in the new schedule. Its omission as a specific item is probably more a matter of politics than of finance.

4. The law specifically instructs the Ministry of Finance to carry out the two major projects of the Habbaniyah reservoir and the Kut barrage and commits the Government to their completion.

5. This programme is being severely criticised by advisers and heads of the spending departments because the restriction of expenditure to Government receipts, coupled with the endorsement by the Government of the major irrigation projects and the building of the Bagdad bridges, will divert the available funds almost entirely to those projects and, in consequence, minor works of probably equal importance will be postponed for two or three years until funds become available. Capital works of various descriptions, including road building, are now in hand, which will cost some £300,000, and if the policy of restricting expenditure to revenue without borrowing is rigidly followed, work on them will have to be slowed down or discontinued altogether when expenditure on the major projects begins. It is probable that the draft law will draw criticism in Parliament on these grounds, particularly from Nuri Pasha and other prominent members of the preceding Government, who are convinced of the wisdom of taking up a foreign loan to finance the Habbaniyah and Kut barrage schemes. Opposition is also expected to develop from members of the Chamber, whose demands for roads, schools, dispensaries, &c., in their constituencies will be elbowed out by the larger schemes.

6. It seems almost certain that, if the law is passed, its provisions will eventually be found to be defective in practice, and it is extremely probable that in time it will share the fate of its predecessor.

7. The draft law stipulates that the works will be financed from the "State Reserve Account," which implies that the Government have at last agreed to the formation of a reserve account to dispose of surpluses and deficits on supply accounts, and into which all oil royalty payments will be made—a course of action which has for long been advocated by the financial adviser.

8. The draft law has been sent to the Chamber of Deputies by the Government, and is now in process of examination by the Finance Committee of the Chamber, who will advise upon the vexed question of precedence of the various projects.

9. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &c.  
(For the Ambassador),  
G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

*Draft Capital Works of Development Law, 1934.*

*Article 1.*—A sum of 3,987,000 Iraqi dinars is allotted for expenditure on capital works of development, during the financial years 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937 and 1938, as set forth in the votes in the accompanying schedule.

*Art. 2.*—The Minister of Finance may "determine articles" (distribute allotments to articles) and effect transfers from one article to another "under each" (? within the same) vote.

*Art. 3.*—The Minister of Finance may determine the annual allotment for each of the years mentioned in article 1 above and make transfers from one year to another.

*Art. 4.*—The Minister of Finance shall carry out the Gharraf and Habbaniyah schemes at a cost not to exceed 1,200,000 Iraqi dinars for the first scheme and 1,100,000 Iraqi dinars for the second scheme.

*Art. 5.*—The allotments determined by this law shall be met from the State Reserve Account No. of 1934.

*Art. 6.*—Allotments made under this law shall be deemed to be a supplement to the general budget for the year to which these allotments relate.

*Art. 7.*—The Capital Works of Development Law No. 79 of 1931 and the two subsequent laws No. 59 of 1932 and No. 44 of 1933 are hereby repealed.

*Art. 8.*—The Minister of Finance is charged with the execution of this law.

*Schedule to the Capital Works of Development Law No. of 1934.*

Vote I.—Irrigation.		Dinars.
Article 1.—Gharraf scheme ... ..	...	1,200,000
Article 2.—Habbaniyah scheme ... ..	...	1,100,000
Article 3.—Naqqarat scheme ... ..	...	100,000
Article 4.—Other (completion) works ... ..	...	91,500
Total, Vote I ... ..	...	2,491,500

Vote II.—Buildings and Equipments.		Dinars.
Article 1.—Ministry of Defence works ... ..	...	757,000
Article 2.—Ministry of Education buildings ... ..	...	58,000
Article 3.—Other (completion) works ... ..	...	116,700
Article 4.—Ministry of Finance building ... ..	...	12,000
Total, Vote II ... ..	...	943,700

Vote III.—Roads and Bridges.		Dinars.
Article 1.—Two bridges in Bagdad ... ..	...	350,000
Article 2.—Roads and completion works ... ..	...	51,500
Article 3.—Bridges (completion) works ... ..	...	42,300
Total, Vote III ... ..	...	443,800

Vote IV.—Loans and Grants.		Dinars.
Article 1.—Encouragement of local industrial undertakings ... ..	...	20,000
Article 2.—Establishment of industrial undertakings ... ..	...	45,000
Article 3.—Grants for filling in of swamps in the capital ... ..	...	10,000
Article 4.—Completion of King Ghazi Street ... ..	...	15,000
Article 5.—Grants to other municipalities ... ..	...	18,000
Total, Vote IV ... ..	...	108,000

Grand total ... .. 3,987,000



[E 2945/16/93]

No. 138.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 8.)*

(No. 228.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, April 26, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to report, in continuation of my despatch No. 217 of the 21st April last, that on the 21st April the Chamber of Deputies adopted the draft law for expenditure on capital works, despite strenuous opposition, after the Government had acceded to a demand for two important alterations.

2. The Government's scheme has been bitterly attacked in the press and in Parliament, as well as having incurred much criticism within the Government itself. The press campaign was directed mainly against the Habbaniyah Escape project on the grounds—

- (a) That the country is not yet ready for large schemes of agricultural development, and
- (b) That the scheme would absorb funds required for other more urgent needs.

3. A number of newspapers have endeavoured to prove that the *raison d'être* of the scheme is to serve the purpose of the new British cantonment at Dhibban by making the Habbaniyah Lake into a seaplane base for British aircraft "proceeding from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf." The *Sawet-al-Ahali* (a paper with communistic features and of doubtful inspiration) regaled its readers with the assertion "that the Habbaniyah scheme is now recognised by all to be a British military venture rather than an irrigation project."

4. It is understood that the Government were able, at a meeting of party members held on the eve of the parliamentary debate on the capital works programme, to placate the dissidents in their own ranks by restricting expenditure on the Habbaniyah project. That part of the scheme which has been designed to serve the purpose of water conservation and agricultural development is to be deleted, and the work is to be reduced to one of flood protection only. As originally drafted, the scheme entailed the construction of an escape for the flood waters of the Euphrates in the vicinity of Ramadi, with a channel to take the water into the Habbaniyah depression. A further channel was to have linked this depression to a still larger area of low land, known as the Abu Dibbis, in order to take off the overflow during periods of exceptionally high floods. The scheme was to be completed by a third channel through which the water would, at convenient periods, be taken from the Habbaniyah Lake back to the river for irrigation purposes. It is this channel which has been designed to run alongside the north-eastern boundary of the Dhibban cantonment and which has now been cut out of the scheme. The result will be a reduction in cost of about half a million pounds sterling. The change of plan has no effect upon the Dhibban cantonment itself.

5. The Habbaniyah project is becoming notorious for the shifts and delays to which it has been subjected by succeeding Governments. In this connexion it is worth recording that the recently appointed Director of Irrigation, Arshad Beg-al-Umari, formerly the Mayor of Bagdad, who is imbued with considerable energy, self-confidence and ambition, is pressing the Government to allow him to carry out the work departmentally by direct labour. It is mainly due to Arshad Beg that the contract of Mr. Allard, the chief irrigation engineer, which expired in December last, is not being renewed. Mr. Allard's technical knowledge of the engineering difficulties of this scheme is unrivalled, and it is a matter for regret that his services are being lost to the Government.

6. A newspaper campaign has begun urging the Government not to hand out important works to foreign contractors when they can be done more cheaply and quite as efficiently by Government Departments. No decision has yet been taken on this proposal, and developments in this direction promise to be interesting. It is, however, by no means certain now that a contract for the construction of the Habbaniyah Escape will be placed with a firm of British contractors after all.

7. In addition, the Government have agreed that only one bridge over the Tigris at Bagdad shall be included in the programme, instead of two. This will reduce the estimated expenditure by a further £175,000.

8. These alterations were accepted formally by the Government during the debate in the Chamber of Deputies, and had the effect of retaining a majority for the Government. A number of ex-Ministers and their supporters strongly criticised the whole of the proposals, and the programme was described as being merely a political trick, by which the nation is to be committed to capital expenditure which will eventually oblige the Government to take up a foreign loan. The proceedings terminated with a theatrical departure of the whole of the Opposition as a protest against the application by the Government of a closure to the discussion. The Bill was then passed unanimously.

9. It has still to be considered by the Senate, where further opposition may be expected, but it is thought unlikely that it will be rejected.

10. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &amp;c.

(For the Ambassador),

G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

[E 3148/1/93]

No. 139.

*United Kingdom Delegate to Foreign Office.—(Received May 15.)*

(No. 37.)

THE United Kingdom delegate to the League of Nations presents his compliments, and has the honour to transmit copies of a note of the twenty-third meeting of Assyrian Committee of Council, on the 7th May, 1934, of which a copy has been sent to His Majesty's Ambassador, Bagdad.

*United Kingdom Delegation, Geneva,  
May 12, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 139.

ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

*Record of the Twenty-third Meeting of the Council Committee held on  
May 7, 1934, at 10.30 A.M.*

THE committee met at first in private to consider Brigadier Browne's report.

The President said that there was also the question of a report to the Council. The committee would have to decide whether to make a report or not. M. Oliván, for his part, thought that the committee ought, in any case, to draw the attention of the Council to the reports which had been received since the last Council meeting from the Iraqi representative on the situation of the Assyrians in Iraq, and he was inclined to think also that it might be well to make a progress report on the work of settlement, in view of the criticisms which were appearing on the slowness of the committee's work.

The question of inviting the members of the Commission of Enquiry and the Iraqi representative to attend was then discussed.

The general feeling of the committee was that it might be embarrassing to have the Iraqi representative present at the outset, as he was not aware of the present position *vis-à-vis* of the Brazilian Government and was not even aware of the three conditions which the Brazilian Government had laid down.

It was agreed, therefore, to decide later on the time at which the Iraqi representative should be summoned, and, meanwhile, to ask Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson and the president of the Nansen Office to attend later in the morning.

In reply to an enquiry from the Danish representative, the President said that he had received no news from the Spanish Ambassador since the last session of the committee.

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*The United Kingdom Representative* said that nothing further had been received from His Majesty's Ambassador. The despatch to the Spanish Ambassador had only been sent off on the 14th April and would not have been for long in the possession of the Spanish Ambassador. It was perhaps unlikely that he would have been able to make much progress as yet, particularly in view of the impending presidential election. The United Kingdom representative understood that this election had now been fixed for the 14th May, and it seemed difficult to make any progress until it was over. He thought, however, that at its present session the committee might usefully examine Brigadier Browne's report from the point of view of the modifications which it might necessitate in the despatch to the Spanish Ambassador.

*The President* agreed and thought that the committee might endeavour to send off as soon as possible a supplementary despatch in the light of its interview with Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson.

*The United Kingdom Representative* suggested that the committee should forthwith go through Brigadier Browne's report and the subsidiary report from Major Johnson in order to gain a preliminary idea of the points which might have to be mentioned to the Spanish Ambassador. These points could form the subject of questions to Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson when they appeared, and the committee could subsequently, on the basis of the discussion, consider a draft to the Spanish Ambassador.

*The President* suggested that, in addition to taking up these points with the mission, the latter might be asked whether they had anything to add to their written report, more particularly regarding the agitation in Brazil.

*The Mexican Representative* having referred to the file of press cuttings which the mission had brought back, M. Arocha said that he did not think anything would be gained by examining the file in detail. There was a great deal of repetition in the articles, which were concerned with three main points:—

- (a) A diatribe against imperialism, and more particularly against British imperialism;
- (b) A criticism of the Assyrians as being Levantine undesirables; and
- (c) Protests against Asiatic immigration in general.

*The Danish Representative* suggested that it might be useful to ask Brigadier Browne for his opinion on the position of the Mar Shimun. It was quite evident that Brigadier Browne and Major Thomson held contradictory views on that subject. Brigadier Browne indicated in his report that the split between the two branches of the Assyrians was not likely to last long in Brazil. Major Thomson, on the other hand, had tended to take the view that the split was fundamental. Furthermore, Brigadier Browne had put forward a suggestion that the Mar Shimun ought to go to Brazil with the first party of Assyrians. M. Borberg was inclined to wonder whether this was, in fact, a wise suggestion.

*The United Kingdom Representative* doubted whether Brigadier Browne was in a position to give an authoritative opinion regarding the present position of the Mar Shimun. He had been away from Iraq for some time and could not be expected to be *au courant* with the latest developments. He could only be expected to offer observations on the Mar Shimun's position in the future in Brazil. The exact position of the Mar Shimun in Iraq was a matter of opinion and it would probably be impossible to gauge the extent of the split between the two factions of Assyrians until a scheme for immigration could be put before them. It was alleged in some quarters that it was natural for the Assyrians to split up into factions and that even in the old days in Turkey they had not been united and had only united in the face of a common danger. The Mar Shimun, on the other hand, always claimed that the Assyrians were a single united people under his leadership. The United Kingdom representative thought that the committee could only, in the first place, put the Brazilian scheme before the Assyrians as a scheme under which it was proposed to settle all the Assyrians who wished to leave Iraq together. It might be that, if this were done, the Assyrians might forget their differences and agree to go together. On the other hand, a certain section might say that they wished to leave Iraq, but would not go with the Mar Shimun. In that case the committee would have to fall back on the idea of a dual settlement.

*The President* said that, although Brigadier Browne had not been recently in Iraq, he appeared to have a profound knowledge of the Assyrians, and it might, nevertheless, be useful to ask him about the Mar Shimun's position.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that he merely wished to point out that it was doubtful whether anyone was able to estimate exactly the Mar Shimun's position at present, and that Brigadier Browne's opinion, though interesting and possibly helpful, could not be taken as authoritative, owing to his absence for some time from Iraq.

In reply to a request from the President for suggestions as to points which ought to be raised with Brigadier Browne, the *United Kingdom Representative* said that he had been through the reports of Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson for the purpose of seeing what modifications they might entail in the despatch of the 10th April to the Spanish Ambassador. It would be remembered that that despatch had taken the line that it would be necessary to negotiate with the Brazilian Government on three points. The first concerned the three conditions laid down by the Brazilian Government, the second the treatment which the Assyrians would enjoy in Brazil, and the third the physical details of settlement. There seemed to be little in the reports of the mission which affected that part of the despatch which concerned the Brazilian conditions, except that a suggestion was made that arrangements might be made for non-agricultural Assyrians to serve an approved period of apprenticeship with qualified agricultural families or in an experimental agricultural station which would be established in the settlement. The committee might wish to authorise the Spanish Ambassador to put a suggestion of this sort before the Brazilian Government in connexion with the first of the Brazilian conditions. The two reports did not appear to affect the despatch so far as it concerned the future treatment of the Assyrians. As regards the physical details of settlement, it had been stated in the despatch that any necessary indications would be offered after consultation with Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson. The United Kingdom representative thought that there was not a great deal in the two reports on this aspect of the matter which need be taken up with the Brazilian Government at this stage, but the committee might wish to consider the following points:—

- (1) A suggestion had been made by Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson that a Brazilian Commission should be sent to Iraq to make a selection of the Assyrians.
- (2) Some special arrangement would no doubt be necessary for allowing those Assyrians who were old and infirm to proceed to Brazil. It was obviously undesirable that such persons should be left in Iraq if their relatives went to Brazil and, in fact, their relatives would be unlikely to leave Iraq without them. The Brazilian Government, however, might be reluctant to accept people in this category, and it might be necessary to satisfy them that the people in question would be adequately maintained in Brazil by their relatives.
- (3) Major Johnson had suggested that the Brazilian Government should be urged to make special arrangements for the customs examination of the baggage of the Assyrians on board ship between Rio and Santos, so as to facilitate disembarkation at Santos.
- (4) It might also be necessary to warn the Brazilian Government that two separate settlements might be required.
- (5) As regards the eventual operation of the settlement scheme, Major Johnson had made three alternative proposals:—
  - (a) That the Nansen Office should make a contract with Paraná Plantations (Limited), under which, in return for a lump sum payment which would cover the cost of land and all administrative costs, the company would carry out the whole work of settlement.
  - (b) That the Nansen Office should merely purchase the necessary land from the company and that the company should then carry out the settlement work as the agents of the Nansen Office, at cost price.
  - (c) That the Nansen Office should purchase the land from Paraná Plantations (Limited) and should itself assume full responsibility for carrying out the settlement plan.



The first of these alternatives might involve the presence of a Nansen representative in Brazil in a consultative capacity only, the second would mean that the work of settlement would be executed by the company but directed on the spot by a commissioner of the Nansen Office, the third would place the whole work of settlement in the hands of a Nansen Office commissioner and a special Nansen Office staff. It might be doubted whether it was necessary to mention these alternatives to the Brazilian Government at the present stage, but the reason why the United Kingdom representative thought it necessary to raise the point was that the alternative ultimately adopted might, to some extent, depend upon the solution of the question of the future national status of the Assyrians. It was conceivable that, if the Assyrians were to become Brazilian nationals at once, the Brazilian Government might object to their administration being placed in the hands of an outside organisation like the Nansen Office. On the other hand, if the Nansen Office purchased the land outright, they would presumably have the right to administer it if they wished to do so. At all events, it might be advisable to draw the attention of the Spanish Ambassador to the three alternatives and to ask him to find out whether any of them would be likely to lead to special difficulties with the Brazilian Government.

*The Mexican Representative* suggested that the mission should be asked for further information regarding the interview which M. Redard had evidently had with the "Society of the Friends of Alberto Torres."

*The Danish Representative* agreed, but thought it important to have the views of the mission on the whole question of the agitation against Assyrian immigration, on the press campaign, and on the forthcoming election in so far as it was likely to concern the Assyrian question. The committee needed information on these points for its own guidance in the matter of publicity.

As no further suggestions were forthcoming, *the President* proposed that the committee should, before the arrival of Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson, take the opportunity of examining the Mar Shimun's letter of the 3rd May. He observed that that letter gave an account of the situation in Iraq which did not correspond with the reports received from the Iraqi Government. It demanded the despatch to Iraq of a commission of enquiry to ascertain the true facts and it asked that destinations other than Brazil should be considered before the Brazilian scheme was proceeded with. M. Oliván thought that, for the time being, the committee must continue to depend on the Iraqi Government's reports regarding the internal situation. At the same time, the committee ought to do its best to find out the truth, and would no doubt wish to consider whether it would be advisable to suggest to the Council (though it was an extremely delicate matter) that a special representative should be despatched to Iraq to make enquiries. Unfortunately, the press was beginning to reproduce the Mar Shimun's allegations. There had been articles that morning in the *Journal de Genève* and in the *Journal des Nations* which had clearly been inspired by the Mar Shimun's allegations. The settlement question was sufficiently difficult without this press campaign. Even if the local agitation in Brazil disappeared, the discussion of technical details was bound to lead to delay. Meanwhile, the committee must think of the Assyrians. It had been definitely given this task by the Council and M. Oliván was anxious that neither the Council nor the committee should, by failing to find out the true position of affairs, become directly responsible for a situation for whose origin they were not responsible.

M. Oliván noted that the Mar Shimun suggested that settlement in Syria, Canada or Turkey might be preferable to settlement in Brazil. As regards Syria, however, he recollected that the committee had already considered this possibility, and his impression was that the French representative had indicated that settlement in Syria was virtually impossible. At the same time, the committee might wish to confirm this by a direct enquiry of the Mandatory Government. As regards Canada, M. Oliván believed that the Canadian Government had already refused to consider Assyrian settlement.

M. Arocha corrected the President on this point. He said that the United Kingdom representative had, he thought, indicated that settlement in Canada was unlikely to be realisable.

*The United Kingdom Representative* reminded the committee that he had several times said that it was impossible for him to speak on behalf of any of the Dominion Governments. In the early days of the committee's life he had indicated, however, that he believed that existing Canadian immigration laws would prevent Assyrian immigration, and that, if the Canadian Government were willing to take the Assyrians, an amendment of their legislation would be necessary. He had also informed the committee that there had been at one time an Assyrian settlement at Port Arthur; that he believed that the settlement no longer existed, and that the experience had shown that the Assyrians were unlikely to be successful settlers in Canada. He had suggested, however, that the League should approach the Canadian Government direct in order to ascertain their attitude, and a letter had been sent by the League Secretariat to the Government of Canada on the 30th November. So far no reply had been received, and it seemed possible that the Canadian Government, being aware from the committee's last report to the Council that the Assyrian scheme was under active consideration, had thought it unnecessary to reply.

M. Arocha then read Nuri Pasha's letter to the Secretary-General of the 26th October last. In this letter Nuri Pasha had expressed his regret that the Mar Shimun's letters of the 24th and 25th October should have been accepted and communicated to the League Committee. The letter had pointed out that the Mar Shimun was, in the eyes of the Iraqi Government, guilty of "the criminal instigation of the recent revolt," and that the admission of undue intervention by him could only prejudice the prospects of a satisfactory result.

*The President* observed that this was, perhaps, the opinion of the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs, but he himself could not share it. The committee could not ignore the Mar Shimun's letter of the 3rd May, or any letter from any other source containing similar allegations. The Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs evidently assumed that the situation of the Assyrians in Iraq was not within the competence of the committee and on that point he was wrong. The League had specifically asked the committee to concern itself with this aspect of the matter.

*The Danish Representative* recalled that the question of the treatment of the Mar Shimun had been discussed by the committee once before. It had then been agreed that the committee must receive the information forwarded by the Mar Shimun and make the best use possible of it. The Mar Shimun's letter made the Danish representative wonder whether the committee was proceeding on the right lines with the Mar Shimun. As an agitator the Mar Shimun could do very great harm, but he could also be very useful, and in the reports of Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson he was evidently cast for an important rôle in Brazil. The Danish representative was not convinced that any change in the relations of the committee and the Mar Shimun was actually necessary, but he thought that the committee had to consider the point very carefully.

*The President* said he was quite prepared to ameliorate relations with the Mar Shimun. He was not clear, however, what could, in fact, be done. He had always seen the Mar Shimun when the latter had requested an interview. The secretariat had also seen him. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom had, he understood, also been in contact with him during a recent visit by the Patriarch to England, and certainly unofficial circles in England had been in close touch with him. To give the Mar Shimun more official recognition might lead to serious difficulties with the Iraqi Government. The president thought that, while nothing should be done to antagonise the Mar Shimun, it was difficult not to leave things as they were.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that he entirely agreed that it was necessary for the committee to carry the Mar Shimun with it. Whatever might be the exact truth about his position, it was clear that he could exercise very considerable influence for good or ill. At the same time it was no easy matter to deal with him, as he appeared unfortunately bent on making trouble. Furthermore, to give him an official status would certainly antagonise the Iraqi Government, whose co-operation was essential if a settlement scheme was to be put into successful operation. The United Kingdom representative did not think, therefore, that there could be any change in the relations between the Mar Shimun and the committee as a whole, though members of the committee might individually do



what they could do to secure his willing co-operation. As regards his report on the situation in Iraq, it was for consideration whether this ought not to be sent to the Iraqi Government for observations. The protest of the Iraqi Government of the 26th October last, which M. Arocha had read, referred to letters in which the Mar Shimun had persisted in going over the same ground as had already been covered by the Council at its session in the first half of October. In so far as this was the case, the Iraqi Government certainly had some justification for their attitude. The present letter, however, concerned new facts and made new allegations and the United Kingdom representative doubted whether the committee could take the responsibility of doing otherwise than asking the Iraqi Government for a report on these allegations.

*The President* said that what offended him was not so much the Mar Shimun's letter as the press campaign which it had evidently inspired, and which it was difficult not to attribute to the Mar Shimun himself. The same tactics had been employed on the occasion of previous meetings of the committee. A letter had been received from the Mar Shimun and immediately a unanimous press campaign in the Geneva papers had followed. It was really intolerable that the Mar Shimun should be allowed to act in this way and to hamper the work of the committee. He wondered whether any influence could be brought to bear upon him, and he asked whether His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom were in a position to exert such influence, or, if not, whether those ecclesiastical circles with which the Mar Shimun was in relation in England could not do something to help.

*The United Kingdom Representative* agreed that the Mar Shimun's activities were regrettable, but unfortunately he was something of an agitator. It was, of course, quite useless for His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to attempt to exert any influence over him. They had no means of doing so, and the Mar Shimun, unfortunately, owing to the past history of the Assyrian question, unjustifiably held His Majesty's Government responsible for the plight of his people and regarded with suspicion any advance which British officials might make to him. The United Kingdom representative had himself endeavoured in the early days of the committee's work to enlist the willing co-operation of the Mar Shimun and had endeavoured to prove to him that His Majesty's Government were anxious to do their best to facilitate a solution of the troubles of the Assyrian people. The Mar Shimun, however, had proved incapable of concentrating on the future and had always insisted on raking up the controversial past. Any intervention by His Majesty's Government, therefore, or by any British official would probably have quite the opposite effect to what was intended. As regards the ecclesiastical circles in Great Britain, the United Kingdom representative believed that everything possible had been done by them to exert a calming influence on the Mar Shimun, but unfortunately he was liable to break out at intervals, as in the present case.

The discussion was suspended at this point owing to the arrival of Brigadier Browne, Major Johnson and M. Werner.

*The President* welcomed the mission and thanked them for their report. He wished also, on behalf of the committee, to thank M. Redard. The committee had examined Brigadier Browne's report and the supplementary report by Major Johnson. Apart from any questions which members of the committee might wish to put, he asked whether the mission had any supplementary information which they wished to give—for instance, any observations on the political atmosphere in Brazil not recorded in the report, which might be of interest now that the political situation in Brazil was in a state of flux. The main question was whether the Brazilian Government would keep a promise which they had made, or whether political changes might produce a change of attitude. What was the view of the mission on this point?

*Brigadier Browne* replied to the thanks which the president had expressed and hoped that the thanks to M. Redard would be conveyed by the committee. M. Redard had been of the greatest possible assistance. Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson had read his earlier report on the Paraná estates, and, while they had gone there with open minds, they had not been prepared to find the place as good as M. Redard had represented it to be. They had, however, found it even

better. As regards the political situation, the mission, when they went to Brazil, had had no idea that they would be called upon to do more than to examine the area proposed, to answer the various points raised in the questionnaire examined by the committee before their departure from Geneva, and to decide, in the light of Brigadier Browne's personal knowledge of the Assyrians, whether they were fit people to put into Paraná. The press campaign in Brazil had come as an entire surprise to the mission. The spearhead of the agitation was the "Society of the Friends of Alberto Torres." This society was, in the first place, scientific, but it had become the chief antagonist of Assyrian immigration. The press had drawn conclusions from the criticisms of self-styled experts. These experts had been uniformly ill-informed. The press had produced a number of illustrations said to be of Assyrian life, but with one exception, *i.e.*, a picture of the Mar Shimun, these illustrations had been concerned with various races of people, but certainly not with Assyrians. As regards the value to be attached to the agitation, Brigadier Browne felt it difficult to form an opinion. At first he had thought it to be simply intended as an embarrassment to the Government. At the close, however, he was not absolutely sure that there was not behind it some kind of anti-Asiatic agitation. It was difficult to judge whether the agitation had upset the scheme for Assyrian settlement, but Brigadier Browne was not at all inclined to think that this was the case. It was very possible that the agitation would die down once the election was over, but, of course, one could not say at this stage. The mission had not answered the press campaign. In the first place, it had no facilities for doing so; in the second place, as it was about to proceed to Paraná, it could not have continued to meet the campaign. In any case, it seemed undesirable to become embroiled with the press, and the mission had thought it preferable merely to draw up an aide-memoire about the Assyrians and to hand it to various influential persons.

*The Mexican Representative* observed that M. Redard had had an interview with the secretary of the Society of Friends of Alberto Torres. Was Brigadier Browne in a position to say more about that interview?

*Brigadier Browne* said that it was true that M. Redard had been to see the secretary of the society, but the latter had been in an extremely excited frame of mind and had, in fact, done all the talking. The interview was not satisfactory and led nowhere, although he believed that M. Redard and the secretary had parted on the best of terms.

Brigadier Browne then read to the committee a letter, dated the 19th April, which had been sent by the local representative of Paraná Plantations (Limited) to his headquarters in London and forwarded by the chairman of Paraná Plantations (Limited) to Major Johnson. This report was to the effect that Mr. Thomas had been informed, unofficially, but by two reliable official sources, that the Federal Government had decided to proceed with the Brazilian scheme and that the Commission of Enquiry had been set up merely to allay the existing agitation and to tide over the period until the election was finished.

Brigadier Browne then asked leave to make two small corrections in his report. On p. 13, regarding the visit of the mission to Guatambu, the following sentence occurred: "Here are 375 families." This was a typing error and should read: "Here there is room for 375 families." On p. 14 it was stated that the title-deeds of Paraná Plantations (Limited) had been found in order. Brigadier Browne asked leave to add at the end of that sentence, "as far as the mission could judge." He explained that he and Major Johnson were naturally not experts in the matter of title-deeds, but they had gone into the matter very carefully and had every reason to suppose that they were in order. Paraná Plantations (Limited) had themselves taken the greatest care in this matter, and it was a point on which to beware in Brazil, as, in certain cases, title-deeds were invalid, as, owing to bad maps and faulty surveying, they had sometimes been duplicated.

*The President* then asked whether any member of the committee would like to put specific points to the mission.

*The United Kingdom Representative* raised the question of the possibility of passing non-agricultural Assyrians through agricultural centres. Was it practicable in this way to overcome the difficulty created by the first Brazilian condition?



*Major Johnson* replied that it was probably too costly to put all the Assyrians through agricultural stations. He had, therefore, in his report made an alternative suggestion about attaching such Assyrians to agricultural families for a certain period. The fact that the Assyrians could not all be described as agriculturalists had been raised in the aide-mémoire which *Brigadier Browne* had handed to various persons in Brazil. It had there been shown that, although some of the Assyrians followed callings which were not strictly agricultural, they were all in a way connected with agricultural life and should not prove to be an embarrassment to the national labour market. This section of the aide-mémoire had raised no opposition from the Brazilian authorities and *Major Johnson* hoped that it would be possible for non-agricultural Assyrians to be absorbed in one of the two ways which he had mentioned, i.e., either by attachment to agricultural families or by training in an agricultural station.

*The President* asked whether the mission had considered the third Brazilian condition concerning the repatriation or resettlement elsewhere of those Assyrians who did not settle down in Brazil.

*Brigadier Browne* said the mission had certainly considered it, but had found no answer.

*The President*, after individual consultation with members of the committee, then informed the mission that, at its last session, the committee had considered it useful to address a despatch to the Spanish Ambassador, in order to invite him to clear up certain points by means of informal discussions with the Brazilian Government. This despatch was of a very confidential nature. The committee now wished to complete it in the light of the additional information which the members of the mission might be in a position to furnish. He accordingly proposed to communicate a copy of the despatch to them and to ask them to furnish comments on it, if possible on the following day.

*The Danish Representative* said that in his report *Brigadier Browne* had made mention of tribal jealousy among the Assyrians. Apart from the controversial question of the position of the Mar Shimun, was it likely that this tribal jealousy would give trouble in Brazil?

*Brigadier Browne* said that the jealousy existed among the Lower and Upper Tiari. Originally it arose, apparently, out of a dispute regarding precedence after the election of the present Mar Shimun. Prior to that time, the Lower Tiari had been considered as the senior tribe. Apart from this it had been found in the levies that the Upper Tiari provided better officers and there were consequently more officers in the levies from that tribe than from the Lower Tiari. The Upper Tiari had, until recently, been considered as rather "wild men of the mountains," and the ascendancy which they had now gained was somewhat resented by the Lower Tiari. The Mar Shimun owed his election principally to the influence of the Malik Ismail of the Upper Tiari. Whether this tribal jealousy would last, *Brigadier Browne* could not say. At the end of his time in Iraq it had been somewhat accentuated, as the Malik Khoshaba had taken employment under the Iraqi Government, which other chiefs had refused to do.

Before adjourning, *the President* asked the president of the Nansen Office whether he had any observations to make.

*M. Werner*, after expressing his appreciation of the work done by the Mission of Enquiry, said that he would like to make some observations on a rather different aspect of the matter. There had been a meeting of the governing body of the Nansen Office on the 22nd April and he had been asked to draw the attention of the committee to what had then passed. The governing body had not been at all enthusiastic about the scheme for the transfer of the Assyrians to Brazil, as this scheme appeared to some of them to be fantastic, and it was certainly tragic that the Assyrians should be separated from that part of the world to which they belonged. The governing body had wished *M. Werner* to express the view that it was essential that the Assyrians should be absolutely free to decide whether to leave Iraq or not. *M. Werner* recalled that he had already taken up this point at a previous meeting of the committee and had then received satisfactory assurances from *M. Oliván*. He had informed his governing body accordingly

and his statement had been received with satisfaction. The governing body realised that it belonged to the Council Committee to take decisions as regards the destination of the Assyrians and the method of their settlement and of their eventual repatriation in case the experiment was not a success, but the governing body thought it most desirable that the sum necessary for financing the settlement should, if possible, be available before a Nansen representative went out to Iraq to join the local committee which had been set up there to ascertain the wishes of the Assyrians as regards the Brazilian scheme. The question of finance was a capital one and, if the Nansen Office were to accept responsibility for the operation of a scheme, they would like to obtain precise information on this point. They would, in particular, be glad to know whether the Assyrians themselves would be asked to contribute. The governing body had merely wished him to put these observations before the committee for consideration. The governing body was quite ready to co-operate with the committee in settling the Assyrians, but would like that co-operation to be dominated by the principles to which he had referred, namely, the voluntary nature of the emigration and the ensuring of adequate financial support to guard against unduly raising the hopes of the Assyrians. *M. Werner* wished to refer to one other point. Under present arrangements the Nansen Office would cease to exist in 1938. He observed, however, from *Major Johnson's* report that the repayment of the sums advanced for settlement would take at least eight years. He would like the committee to consider, therefore, what organisation was to deal with this matter when the Nansen Office had disappeared. He had himself several times been asked for assurances that the office would, in fact, be wound up by 1938, and he had given such assurances, as he was bound to do under the decisions reached by the League, but the committee must obviously ensure continuity.

*The President* assured *M. Werner* that emigration would be voluntary. The committee had always been anxious to ensure this. As regards the place of settlement, that naturally had to depend on available possibilities. If the committee had had a great choice, it was conceivable that it would have chosen a place other than Brazil, but the choice was restricted. As regards finance, once the Brazilian Government had agreed to take the Assyrians, and the technical aspect of the matter had been studied and settled with that Government, he thought *M. Werner* could rest assured that the committee would take matters in the order which he had suggested, namely, that it would feel bound to assure itself that the necessary finance would be forthcoming before it authorised the local committee to ascertain the wishes of the Assyrians. The question of the prolongation of the life of the Nansen Office was, he feared, outside the scope of the present committee, and was a matter which would have to be referred in due course to the Council.

*The President* said that he had made these observations without prior consultation with the members of the committee. They expressed his own personal views and he would be glad to know whether they were adopted as the views of the committee.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said he felt bound to make one reservation to avoid possible misunderstanding, on the question of finance. He entirely appreciated *M. Werner's* desire that finance should be assured before any scheme was put before the Assyrians. If this could be done, it would be all to the good, but it might not be practicable to take matters in this order. At all events, he thought it premature for the committee to enter into any commitment on the point. *M. Werner* would realise that, until the Assyrians had been consulted, it would not be known how many of them wished to go to Brazil and consequently how much money would have to be found. Until this stage was reached, Governments might have some difficulty in promising a contribution. On the other hand, the risk of reversing the order might not be very great. If, for instance, the area in Brazil had been shown to be satisfactory, if the Brazilian Government had consented to receive the Assyrians and the details had been satisfactorily settled with them, and if the Assyrians had declared that they were willing to go, the United Kingdom representative felt that the members of the League could scarcely afford at that stage to let the scheme fail and that means would be found of overcoming any difficulties about providing the necessary finance.



The President regretted that, so far as he personally was concerned, he could not agree with the United Kingdom representative. He felt that it was absolutely necessary, before any scheme was put before the Assyrians, to make sure that the necessary finance would be forthcoming. That was, however, his personal opinion and, in expressing it, he had hoped that he had been expressing the opinion of the committee. But, no doubt, the committee would consider the matter further at a more advanced stage.

The United Kingdom Representative said that he thought it was perhaps premature to go further into the point at this stage. It might be that matters would work out as M. Werner and the President desired. On the other hand, that course might prove impracticable and what he had desired to guard against was a premature commitment. He had felt bound to make his reservation to guard against any misapprehension in M. Werner's mind. He repeated, however, that he fully appreciated and sympathised with M. Werner's desire to have the question of finance settled, if possible, before any scheme was put before the Assyrians.

M. Werner expressed his appreciation of the replies given by M. Oliván and by the United Kingdom representative, and intimated that he was content to leave the matter to be discussed by the committee at a later stage.

The Mexican Representative asked Brigadier Browne whether the Assyrians were likely to become part and parcel of their new country or to try to remain as a minority.

Brigadier Browne said that it would have to be explained to the Assyrians that they would have to assimilate with the inhabitants of the new country and serve in the army, &c. He thought that this would raise no difficulty with the Assyrians, but it would certainly have to be made quite plain to them. It would be wrong to send them to Brazil with any false idea that they would remain a nation apart. The Brazilian Government would certainly never tolerate this.

Brigadier Browne felt bound to comment on one remark which had been made by M. Werner. M. Werner had referred to the tragedy of separating the Assyrians from the part of the world to which they belonged. It must be remembered, however, that it was not a case of the transfer of the Assyrians from their own lands. They were not, in fact, in their own lands now, though they were almost in sight of them. They were already refugees.

M. Werner said that he realised that they were not, for the most part, in the country of their origin, but they had belonged from time immemorial to Asia Minor, and he adhered to the view that it was regrettable that they should have to be removed from there.

It was agreed that a further meeting should be held at 5 P.M. to continue the study of the Mar Shimun's letter and that the question of a further despatch to the Spanish Ambassador at Rio should be considered on the following morning. A decision would then be taken as to meeting the Iraqi representative and arrangements would be made for seeing the film of the Paraná area which the Mission of Enquiry had prepared.

J. C. STERNDAL BENNETT.

[E 3149/1/93]

No. 140.

United Kingdom Delegate to Foreign Office.—(Received May 15.)

(No. 38.)

THE United Kingdom delegate to the League of Nations presents his compliments, and has the honour to transmit copies of a note of the twenty-fourth Meeting of the Assyrian Committee of Council, on the 7th May, 1934, of which a copy has been sent to His Majesty's Ambassador, Bagdad.

United Kingdom Delegation, Geneva,  
May 12, 1934.

Enclosure in No. 140.

# ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

Record of the Twenty-fourth Meeting of the Council Committee, held on  
May 7, 1934, at 5 P.M.

THE president proposed that the committee should continue at this meeting its consideration of the issues raised by the Mar Shimun's letter of the 3rd May. It was also necessary to consider the question of a report to the Council. If it were decided to present a report, M. Oliván wished to make the suggestion that a *rapporteur* should be appointed. He himself would have to act as the Council's *rapporteur* and had many other questions to attend to, and he thought there would be some advantage in entrusting the preparation of a report to another member of the committee. If Brigadier Browne's report were to be presented to the Council, some explanation regarding it would be necessary. It was a long document, and it might be advisable to bring out the salient points in the covering report of the committee. This might result in difficulties. On the other hand, it would perhaps be odd to pass over the report on the Brazilian scheme in silence, in view of the report which the committee had made to the Council at its last session. The alternatives seemed to be (1) to present a brief progress report outlining what the committee had done since the last session of the Council, or (2) to prepare a much more detailed report with Brigadier Browne's report attached. The nature of the report would, to some extent, depend on the decision which the committee might arrive at with regard to the Mar Shimun's letter. The League was committed to a certain responsibility in regard to the situation of the Assyrians in Iraq. M. Oliván did not necessarily believe all the statements made by the Mar Shimun. On the other hand, the committee had at present to rely solely on reports from the Iraqi Government, and these reports could not be considered impartial. The Mar Shimun's letter contained a suggestion that an independent investigation should be made, and the committee might wish to inform the Council that its existing means of ascertaining what was the situation in Iraq were inadequate, and might wish to suggest that the Council should consider the despatch to Iraq either of a commission or of a special representative to make enquiries. It was for the committee to decide whether it was satisfied to continue to receive information from the Iraqi Government or whether it should propose to the Council other means.

The Mexican Representative said that, while the committee ought to do everything possible to watch over the situation of the Assyrians until their emigration took place, he was in favour of treating the Mar Shimun's letter merely as a source of information in the same way as one would take a press report. The committee ought to take steps to prevent the recurrence of anything like the events of last August, but he thought that it should act through the Iraqi Government, with whom sole responsibility lay.

The President said that this was, in effect, what the committee had hitherto done. It was evident that the Iraqi Government were responsible, and, in the Council's resolution of October last, that Government had been asked to keep the committee informed about the situation of the Assyrians. The committee had hitherto been content to rely on such reports, but the President wondered whether it would not be wise to try to obtain other sources of information.

The Mexican Representative suggested that the committee should send the gist of the Mar Shimun's letter to the Iraqi representative, as though it were information received from press sources which the committee desired to verify.

The President felt that the committee could hardly deal in this way with a Government. He thought that, if the possibility of an independent enquiry on the spot was ruled out, there were no adequate means of progress.

The Danish Representative pointed out that in Iraq we were dealing with a young sovereign State. The proposal for a special investigation must be considered from that point of view, and one must remember that a special commission of investigation might give rise to agitation and trouble between the Assyrians and the Iraqis.



The President said that he fully realised the delicacy of the matter. He remembered how difficult it had been to get the Iraqi Government to agree even to the establishment of the local committee set up in the Council Committee's resolution of the 31st October last. He felt, in fact, that a suggestion for the despatch of a special commission would almost certainly meet with a blank refusal from the Iraqi Government. At the same time, he thought there might be some advantage in inserting in the report to the Council a paragraph showing that the present means of information were inadequate. He had always felt that the committee was in a false position. The Council had entrusted it with the task of watching over the plight of the Assyrians, but had not given it the means of doing so. He was anxious that the committee should not be saddled with an unfair responsibility, and it might be well to draw the Council's attention to the lack of means of checking reports on the situation in Iraq.

The United Kingdom Representative said that this was probably the most difficult question which the committee had so far attempted to discuss. For his part, he did not wish, without the fullest consideration of the advantages and disadvantages, to pronounce on the proposal to ascertain the facts by means of an independent investigation. He would, therefore, only, for the moment, put before his colleagues some of the practical difficulties and dangers which would have to be taken into account. The Iraqi Government had hitherto refused to consider anything in the nature of a Commission of Enquiry, and it was not, he thought, entirely a case of *amour-propre*. The position in Iraq was an extremely difficult one, owing to the mixture of races, and, if a Commission of Enquiry went out, it would certainly arouse many passions and would be a focus for all sorts of complaints from the Assyrians. This might easily arouse inter-racial difficulties, and, by sending out such a commission, the League might quite well risk stirring up the very troubles which it wished to avoid. The United Kingdom representative did not say that this ruled out the idea, but it was necessary to consider the risk. Furthermore, he could not help feeling that the despatch of a Commission of Enquiry might be a kind of red herring across the trail of the settlement work which was the main task of the committee. The great thing was to get the Assyrian problem solved by the removal of the Assyrians from Iraq as soon as possible, and the committee should be careful to do nothing which might hamper rather than help this work. The risks were serious ones to take unless the allegations of a single interested party were supported by reports from other sources. It was easy for the Mar Shimun to make somewhat irresponsible accusations and then to claim that, if there were any doubt about the truth of these accusations, a certain course should be adopted which the Mar Shimun must know perfectly well would be liable to cause serious trouble. The committee must beware of being influenced by the Mar Shimun to play his game. The United Kingdom representative was not, of course, in a position to pronounce on the truth of many of the statements made in the Mar Shimun's letter, but some of these statements were obviously exaggerated and tendentious. On the other hand, some of the allegations were serious and disquieting, and the committee certainly could not afford to leave the letter on one side without taking any action. But he asked the committee to bear in mind that Iraq was now a fully independent State and that no measures should be suggested which the committee would be unwilling to suggest in the case of any other fully independent State. A recommendation that some special machinery be set up for ascertaining the facts would indicate, after all, that the committee placed no reliance on the reports of the Iraqi Government, and this was a serious reflection to make without even giving the Iraqi Government a chance to answer the Mar Shimun's charges. It seemed to the United Kingdom representative that responsibility must be placed on the Iraqi Government, and that there was perhaps some advantage in treating this matter on purely normal lines. The committee had received certain accusations, of the truth of which it was not in a position to judge. The natural course, therefore, seemed to be to forward the letter to the Iraqi Government and to ask for their comments. The committee had the right to do this, and the United Kingdom representative thought that it was its duty also, and that the committee should not be deflected from taking this course by the fact that the Iraqi Government had protested in previous cases. He suggested, however, that the letter should not merely be sent to the Iraqi representative with a formal request for observations, but that the president should see Taufiq Beg Suwaidi and explain to him the

anxiety which the committee felt and their desire to get at the truth of the situation. The president might also impress on Taufiq Bey that the committee relied upon the Iraqi Government to prevent any recurrence of the events of last August.

The United Kingdom representative repeated that he did not wish to press this course if the committee desired to consider further the question of some independent investigation, and his remarks were simply made as a contribution to a general objective discussion. He did not wish to suggest that there was no cause for anxiety regarding the present situation of the Assyrians in Iraq. He reminded the committee, indeed, that he had constantly referred to the risks involved if settlement were long delayed and to the ease with which a dangerous situation could be produced. He wished to emphasise these points again, but such information as was in his possession inclined him to believe that the present situation was not so serious as the Mar Shimun's letters would lead one to suppose. Naturally, His Majesty's Government were not in a position to give an authoritative report on the situation, and they could not accept the responsibility of keeping watch over it or of guaranteeing it. Nevertheless, they did what was possible to keep in touch with it, as they were naturally anxious that nothing should go wrong if it could be avoided, and, if the committee wished, the United Kingdom representative, although not authorised to do so by his Government, would be willing, by way of indication, to communicate to the committee, orally, the substance of certain recent reports made by His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad.

The President repeated that he fully realised the difficulty of proposing an independent commission. Juridically, of course, Iraq was fully independent. There were perhaps *nuances* in the matter of independence, but he did not wish to pursue this point. He was sure that the committee would be glad to receive any information which the United Kingdom representative could give, and he wondered whether His Majesty's Government would be prepared to supply further information in the future. He did not suggest that they should take any official responsibility in this matter, but it would naturally be of interest to the committee to have any information which His Majesty's Government felt in a position to supply.

The United Kingdom Representative said that he would submit this suggestion to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. He could not, of course, encourage the hope that they would be willing to furnish information regularly. There were many difficulties, and His Majesty's Government might well feel that they could not assume responsibility for keeping the committee informed in this matter. At the same time he felt sure that they were anxious to help the committee as much as possible, and, in the absence of serious objection, they might conceivably be willing to communicate to the committee such information of interest as they might receive. Meanwhile, he was prepared, on his own responsibility, to give confidentially the substance of certain recent reports received from His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad.

About the middle of March the Ambassador visited the Assyrian refugee camp at Mosul and received two deputations of Assyrians at the British consulate. The following were extracts from a letter written by him at the time:—

"I went round every tent and living-room in the camp and asked the women whether they had any complaints or suggestions to make for the health and comfort of themselves or their children. The answer was almost the same in every case. They expressed gratitude for the abundant food and excellent arrangements which had been made for their accommodation, but enquired anxiously how long it would be before they could be removed to another country approved by the League of Nations. I have seldom seen such healthy-looking children, and no trace of the eye disease with which they are so commonly afflicted in their own homes was noticeable. The Assyrian doctor in charge of the medical arrangements in the camp informed me that there had been practically no sickness among the refugees since the 1st January, and that the very few deaths which had occurred were among sickly new-born infants who had no chance of surviving. Dr. McLeod, the civil surgeon of Mosul, who has had a long experience of medical work in this country, told me that he had no hesitation in saying that these Assyrian refugees enjoyed far better conditions of health and general well-being than they were accustomed to in their own villages.



"The two deputations of Assyrian men whom I interviewed complained chiefly of the delay which had occurred in finding a new home for those Assyrians who wished to leave Iraq. They informed me that practically the whole Assyrian community was anxious to go, if a suitable country could be found elsewhere. I explained to them that it was no easy matter to transplant 20,000 refugees to a distant country. The League had set up a special committee, which had held several meetings at Geneva and had despatched a committee of experts to South America to make enquiries and report. I impressed on them once more that they should do everything to prevent able-bodied Assyrians from leaving their cultivated lands and crowding into the towns. It was likely that whatever Government agreed to receive them would require that the new settlers should be agriculturalists.

"The warm clothing that had so kindly been purchased by Lord Lugard and the 'Save the Children Fund' was unfortunately despatched by the long route via Basra, in spite of the instructions sent from Bagdad, and the bulk of it arrived in Mosul on the day of my visit. Although this clothing arrived too late to be of use during the winter, it is a very welcome reserve for future emergencies. The Iraqi Government made a liberal provision of warm clothes and bedding for the refugees during the past cold season, and I did not receive a single complaint on the score of insufficiency of clothing during my visit to the camp.

"The plight of the refugees who have come in from the villages to Mosul gives no cause for serious anxiety at present, as there is still plenty of money in the possession of the Assyrian community, and the well-to-do are notoriously generous in assisting their less fortunate fellow-tribesmen. Every effort, however, is still being made by British and Iraqi officials in the service of the Iraqi Government to induce these refugees to return to their villages and work in the fields until arrangements have been made to accommodate them in a new country."

That was in the middle of March, but the Ambassador had, towards the end of April, made a further tour in the north of Iraq, in the course of which he had had the opportunity of visiting a number of Assyrian villages and of discussing the situation with all shades of Assyrian opinion.

In Mosul and the villages in the Dohuk and Shaikhan areas he formed the impression that the state of security was good, but that there was a definite apprehension about the future—particularly as regards the attitude of the Kurds if re-settlement were long delayed. The Assyrians in these areas were living chiefly on their savings and on the charity of their friends, and had so far refused, with few exceptions, to sow their crops, in spite of the readiness of the Iraqi Government to repair their houses and to provide the necessary means. Sir F. Humphrys estimated the numbers in these areas at about 12,000, and gained the impression that the majority would wish to leave.

On the other hand, the majority of the 8,000 Assyrians living in the districts of Amadiya, Harir and Rowanduz showed signs of wishing to remain in Iraq if security remained as at present. In these areas there had been practically no losses of property or rifles. No fears were expressed to Sir F. Humphrys about security and the Assyrians were generally prosperous, though some were chafing under the burden of supporting the families of men who had gone to Syria.

These reports appeared to show that there was at present no need for exceptional measures. On the other hand, Sir F. Humphrys emphasised the dangerous situation which was likely to arise if there were delay in resettlement. In March he had said that the general attitude of the Assyrians was one of restless expectation. They still possessed some 4,000 to 5,000 rifles, and serious trouble might easily develop out of any incident. In his last report Sir F. Humphrys said that he had urged the Iraqi Government to do everything possible to provide adequate security, and, if they fulfilled their promises, he did not anticipate trouble from either Assyrians or Kurds during the summer. But he feared that destitution might assume serious proportions unless some emigration could start in the next five months. Frustrated hopes would engender feelings of despair and would lead to thefts and clashes with their neighbours. Once this happened the situation would rapidly become dangerous, and Sir F. Humphrys urged that, if possible, emigration should start in July and continue in August and September, as this would not only relieve the pressure, but would stimulate the patience of those left behind.

*The President* expressed sincere appreciation for this information. He confessed himself anxious, however, about the suggestion that emigration ought to begin so early. He did not himself see how this was to be brought about. The negotiations were bound to take a long time and it would be necessary to submit the whole scheme to the Council for definite approval before it could be put into effect, and, if this could not be done at the forthcoming Council, which was obviously impossible, there was no other Council until September.

*The Danish Representative* said that he disagreed with the president's view. The Council had purposely delegated wide powers to the committee and his view was that, unless a question arose of engaging the financial responsibility of the League, he did not think that any further reference to the Council was necessary before a scheme could be put into operation.

*The President* admitted that the Danish Representative was right. On the other hand, would the committee be able to settle the difficult question of finance itself, even though the responsibility of the League was not engaged? So far there was an offer from His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to pay their share of a League contribution. There was a somewhat vague offer from the Iraqi Government and the prospects of that offer being implemented presumably diminished as time went on. There was, further, an appeal made by the League to Governments and private institutions which had so far remained entirely without answer.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that he felt obliged to take up this point about finance. He regretted that during the morning's meeting he had had to express his disagreement with the president in M. Werner's presence. He was bound to recall, however, that the committee in its last report to the Council had clearly contemplated that the question of finance could not be settled until the number of the Assyrians who wished to leave Iraq was known. The report had actually said that the Iraqi Government could not decide their contribution until this stage had been reached. Furthermore, the appeal which the Council had made had been based on a passage in the committee's report which had suggested that Governments and private institutions might be asked to make up the balance when the size of the contributions of the Iraqi Government and the Assyrians themselves was known. Obviously, therefore, the appeal was not intended to be taken immediately into consideration and very probably no Government had even considered it yet. He himself very much doubted whether it was practicable to expect a response to the appeal until the Assyrians had been consulted as regards their wishes, and it was for that reason that he had felt bound to intervene during the morning's meeting.

*The President* agreed that the committee's report at the last Council did suggest that the question of finance could only be settled after the Assyrians had been consulted, and that the committee could only proceed with its work in the hope of getting through the various stages in time to allow of emigration during the summer. Meanwhile, he thought that the committee had sufficiently discussed the question of sending out a special commission of enquiry to Iraq and that any such idea might be withdrawn for the time being. He proposed that the committee should proceed to consider the nature of its report to the Council.

*The Danish Representative* said that, on this question, committee must consider the political situation in Brazil and particularly the fact that the election was due to take place on the 14th May. It might be well to postpone any discussion in the Council until after that date.

*The President* pointed out that it was not only the date of the report that was in question, but whether any report should be rendered to the Council at all.

*The French Representative* asked whether the matter could not be dealt with in a private session of the Council. It was pointed out, however, that this would really offer no advantage. The question at issue was not really what the committee could report to the Council, but what could be published at this stage.

*The Danish Representative* suggested that an attempt should be made to get a telegraphic report from the Spanish Ambassador in Rio as to whether publicity after the 14th May was likely to be dangerous.



*The President* expressed the view that the election was, according to press reports, not likely to proceed entirely normally. It might, in fact, give rise to some disturbances and trouble. Also, it would take some time for the new Government to settle down, and he did not think that the 14th May could be regarded as a decisive date. There was likely to be a period of some uncertainty after that. He then asked for the opinion of other members of the committee on the question of presenting a report.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that to present no report at all might give rise to fresh rumours and might produce a bad effect, not only in Brazil but among the Assyrians and their sympathisers, who were expecting some definite decision at the forthcoming Council. It might be, therefore, that to present no report could create more trouble than a report which referred to the Brazilian scheme. In any case, the last report of the committee had dealt extensively with the Brazilian scheme and it would be extremely odd if the next report were entirely silent about it. His own view was that the committee must inform the Council briefly of the state of its work, but any report would naturally have to be a meagre one as there were many details which could not be published at present.

*The President* said that he was inclined to share this view. The members of the Council who were not represented on the Council Committee could be informed orally and privately of the reasons for which it had been necessary to present a meagre report.

After further discussion, it was agreed that there was little reason not to mention the Brazilian scheme and the difficulties which prevented its immediate application. After all, those difficulties were already to a large extent common property, and it was perhaps desirable that the committee should refer to them briefly, rather than by silence invite a charge of slackness and lack of energy itself.

*The United Kingdom Representative* was ultimately invited to act as the *rapporteur* of the committee and to draw up a report for consideration at the opening of the Council meeting. It was suggested that this report should annex Brigadier Browne's report and, possibly, Major Johnson's report, and also the correspondence which had passed with the Iraqi Government since the last meeting of the Council. It was agreed that Brigadier Browne's report and Major Johnson's report should be carefully edited for this purpose, so as to remove any passages which might give rise to press controversy at this stage, and it was decided that the report should mention that the committee had discussed the situation of the Assyrians in Iraq with the Iraqi representative. It was agreed that no mention should be made of the Mar Shimun's letter of the 3rd May.

The committee then turned to further consideration of the Mar Shimun's letter.

*The President* said that he was inclined to agree with the United Kingdom representative in suggesting that the letter should be communicated officially to the Iraqi Government. At the same time, if the committee agreed, he would speak to Tawfiq Beg Suwaidi and explain the anxiety of the committee to have the Mar Shimun's allegations thoroughly investigated. He proposed to have an interview with the Iraqi representative for that purpose on the following day.

The president then invited the committee to consider the second part of the Mar Shimun's letter, which advocated steps to settle the Assyrians in Canada, Turkey and Syria. He asked whether the committee thought it worth while to send a reminder to the Government of Canada.

*The United Kingdom Representative* expressed doubt as to the advisability of this course. What he had himself envisaged was that, if the Brazilian scheme broke down, the Canadian Government, and any other Government which had not replied to the League's enquiry, might be approached with a good deal more insistence than was now possible. They could then be urged to consider the matter favourably. If, however, a mere reminder were sent to them at this stage, they would almost certainly, so long as the fate of the Brazilian scheme was unknown, take up a negative attitude from which it might be very difficult to dislodge them at a later stage.

It was agreed that it would be preferable not to remind the Canadian Government at the moment.

It was also agreed that there was little purpose in approaching the Government of Turkey and, in fact, it was undesirable to do so, since, in the unlikely event of their agreeing to take the Assyrians, it would certainly be impossible to get them to agree to special safeguards for them.

*The President* then asked the French representative whether he saw any objection to a request to the mandatory Power to consider settlement in Syria.

*The French Representative* said that this was a difficult question. His own view was that it was better not to chase two hares at the same time, and that to approach other Governments might be bad policy in the dealings of the committee with Brazil. Apart from this, the question of settlement in Syria was, he thought, likely to be one of some difficulty, judging by the difficulties which the French Government were experiencing in the matter of other immigrants.

It was agreed that, for the time being, at all events, no note should be addressed to the French Government, but that the committee should continue to concentrate on the Brazilian scheme.

After a discussion on future arrangements, M. Arocha informed the committee that a request had been received from the International Labour Office asking for a collection of documents concerning the Assyrian settlement scheme to assist the International Labour Office in its study of questions of colonisation.

It was agreed to defer consideration of this request until it had been decided to what extent Brigadier Browne's and Major Johnson's reports should be modified. It was felt that, if these reports were communicated to the International Labour Office, they should be communicated in the same form in which they might ultimately be presented to the Council of the League.

J. C. STERNDAL BENNETT.

[E 3150/1/93]

No. 141.

*United Kingdom Delegate to Foreign Office.—(Received May 15.)*

(No. 39.)

THE United Kingdom delegate to the League of Nations presents his compliments, and has the honour to transmit copies of a note of the 25th meeting of Assyrian Committee of Council, on the 8th May, 1934, of which a copy has been sent to His Majesty's Ambassador, Bagdad.

*United Kingdom Delegation, Geneva,  
May 12, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 141.

ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

*Record of the Twenty-Fifth Meeting of the Council Committee, held on  
May 8, 1934, at 10 A.M.*

THE President invited Brigadier Browne to comment on the despatch to the Spanish Ambassador of the 10th April, which had been communicated to him on the previous day.

Brigadier Browne observed that, in the first paragraph of the despatch, reference was made to the authorisation which was sent to him to communicate the first part of his preliminary report to the Brazilian authorities. In point of fact, the mission had doubted whether this was opportune, and had not communicated the document. They had simply informed interested Ministers of the gist of the report.

Major Johnson suggested that, if it was the intention of the committee that the preliminary report should be communicated to the Brazilian authorities, the Spanish Ambassador might now be authorised to communicate it.

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It was agreed to leave this point until a decision had been taken as to what circulation should be given to the final report of the mission.

*Brigadier Browne* observed that, in paragraph 4 of the despatch of the 10th April, it was said that the committee understood that the conditions would only be favourable for settlement operations until September. The mission had, however, come to the conclusion that some settlement might be possible this year even after that date. It was true that, after September, clearing would be difficult on account of the rains, and special arrangements would have to be made for the maintenance of those immigrants who went out after September. At the same time, if it was necessary for a certain number to go after September, there would be no insuperable difficulty.

It was agreed to reserve this point for future consideration and not to say anything about it to the Spanish Ambassador at the present time.

As regards the suggestion in paragraph 7 that the Spanish Ambassador could count upon the support of the local representatives of the Governments represented on the Council Committee, *Brigadier Browne* said that he thought that the Spanish Ambassador would appreciate the help of all these representatives. When the mission had been in Rio, the Spanish Ambassador had appeared to doubt whether he was able to call upon them for help, and their co-operation might strengthen his position.

*The President* said that it might be well for the members of the committee to ask their Governments to instruct their representatives in Rio to assist the Spanish Ambassador, if necessary.

*The Danish and Italian Representatives* intimated that this had already been done in their case, and that the representatives in Rio of their respective countries had been kept informed of what had passed in Geneva, and had been supplied with documents other than the actual instructions sent to the Spanish Ambassador on the 10th April, which it had been thought inappropriate to communicate, as this was perhaps better left to the Spanish Ambassador to do.

*The United Kingdom Representative* pointed out that, whatever the position might have been when *Brigadier Browne* and *Major Johnson* were in Brazil, it would presumably now have been remedied by the despatch of the 10th April, which specifically told the Spanish Ambassador that he could count upon the support of the other representatives and, particularly, on that of His Majesty's Ambassador. There had, of course, already been close co-operation between the Spanish Ambassador and His Majesty's Ambassador, as telegrams from the two Ambassadors showed.

*The President* recalled that earlier instructions sent to the Spanish Ambassador in January last had made much the same point. He thought matters might be left as they were for the present, though each member of the committee would no doubt consider whether any fresh instructions to the representative of their country in Rio were necessary.

*Brigadier Browne* then referred to the statement of the Brazilian conditions in paragraph 9 (1) of the despatch. The second condition stated that the settlement must occasion no expense to Brazil. In this connexion he would like to point out that, if immigrants were transported on the Government railways, free passages could be requisitioned for them. This did, in effect, involve expense to the Brazilian Government. In reply to a question by the Danish representative, *Brigadier Browne* added that he thought the committee was justified in assuming that this concession would be granted, even in the case of a large number of immigrants like the Assyrians. The mission had certainly been given to understand this by the Brazilian authorities.

The question was raised whether anything on these lines should be said to the Spanish Ambassador. The United Kingdom representative observed that the point had already been dealt with to some extent in paragraph 27 of the despatch, where the hope was expressed that the Brazilian Government would accord railway facilities similar to those which were given to immigrants in general.

The general view of the committee, however, appeared to be that it might be well to point out to the Spanish Ambassador that the commission had received an assurance on this point.

*Major Johnson* said that the assurance came from Dr. *Bandeira de Mello*, who had informed him that any immigrant was entitled to free transport. This did not apply to small numbers only, but to any number of immigrants. It was given in the case of the Japanese, and there was no reason why the committee should not request the Brazilian Government to give the same concession to the Assyrians.

*Brigadier Browne* said that this completed his observations on the despatch of the 10th April.

*The United Kingdom Representative* suggested that the committee should now consider whether to draw the attention of the Spanish Ambassador, in a supplementary despatch, to particular points arising out of the reports of *Brigadier Browne* and *Major Johnson* which might at some stage require discussion with the Brazilian Government.

*The President* asked *Brigadier Browne* whether he thought this necessary or desirable.

*Brigadier Browne* said that the Spanish Ambassador was already in possession of a copy of his report, but not of *Major Johnson's* report, which had been completed since the commission left Brazil. It would, no doubt, be necessary to send to the Spanish Ambassador a copy of the latter report, but he doubted whether the despatch that had already been sent needed any addition. The Spanish Ambassador had already been given a formidable task, and it would perhaps be better to send no further details until after the election in Brazil, when the prospects would be easier to judge.

*The President* said that this corresponded with his own ideas. He thought that the task of the Spanish Ambassador should at present be political rather than technical, and he was not anxious for him to be drawn too closely into technical details. He thought that the committee should wait until the general questions of principle explained in the despatch of the 10th April had been cleared up before doing more.

*The United Kingdom Representative* explained that he had no wish to go outside the framework of the despatch of the 10th April, but that despatch had been specifically subject to modification in the light of consultation with *Brigadier Browne* and *Major Johnson*. It had pointed out that the negotiations with the Brazilian Government must cover (a) the conditions laid down by that Government, (b) the future treatment of the Assyrians, and (c) the physical details of settlement. The committee had refrained in the despatch from entering into the third of these points, and the Spanish Ambassador had been informed that they would send any necessary indications after *Brigadier Browne's* return to Geneva. All he had in mind was to complete the despatch, as promised.

*The President* agreed that that was the position, but doubted whether it was necessary to enter into further details at present. He thought that the best course would be merely to ensure that the Spanish Ambassador was in possession of the same information as the committee, i.e., that he had both *Brigadier Browne's* and *Major Johnson's* reports. He did not think that any further progress on this point could be made until the question had been settled whether these reports should remain in their present form or be modified. If the reports were presented to the Council in a modified form, he thought that the originals ought to be suppressed and the modified copies only circulated to all concerned, including the Spanish Ambassador.

*Major Johnson* then drew attention to the varying rates of exchange current in Brazil. The official rate was 60 milreis to the pound, but on the so-called Black Bourse a very much better rate could be obtained. The point was one of importance in connexion with the total cost of the scheme. The contract would have to be drawn up in milreis, and the League might effect a considerable saving if it could obtain a better exchange rate than the official one. Naturally, the



League could not deal on the Black Bourse, but there was also what was known as the Grey Bourse, where, for the purpose of certain transactions and with governmental authority, the rate of 72 milreis to the pound was obtainable. Major Johnson suggested that the committee might comment on this fact to the Spanish Ambassador, and recommend the latter to bear it in mind and to endeavour to find out whether governmental facilities for dealings on the Grey Bourse could be put at the League's disposal.

Discussion took place between the Danish representative and Major Johnson as to whether it could not be left to Paraná Plantations (Limited) to obtain this favourable rate of exchange, the rôle of the League being to support their application with the Brazilian Government.

It was decided to consider this question further at a later stage.

*The President* thanked Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson for the assistance which they had given, and asked them to keep in touch with the United Kingdom representative for the purpose of helping him to draw up the proposed report to the Council, and of deciding what modifications, if any, were necessary in the two reports which they had presented, if those reports were to be communicated to the Council and published.

*(Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson then withdrew.)*

The President then asked the committee to consider what was to be said to the Iraqi representative, who had been invited to attend at 4.30 that afternoon. He proposed, before that meeting, to hand to the Iraqi representative, with a personal explanation, the official letter asking for the observations of the Iraqi Government on the Mar Shimun's letter of the 3rd May. The next question was how much should be said to the Iraqi representative about Brigadier Browne's report. It was obviously not possible to furnish Taufiq Beg with a copy of the report in its present state, if it were subsequently to be modified. The president proposed, therefore, that he should simply give the Iraqi representative a general outline, and should say that the reports of Brigadier Browne and Major Johnson would be communicated to him in due course.

This led to a further discussion of how far the reports could be communicated to the Council and published.

*The French Representative* suggested that the committee should merely extract and communicate to the Council that part of Brigadier Browne's report which referred to the questionnaire which had been considered before the mission left for Brazil. The rest of the report might be left aside.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that a hurried examination which he had made of Brigadier Browne's report from the point of view of publicity had made him doubtful whether it would be possible to communicate to the Council more than a very small part of the report. Apart from references to the political situation in Brazil, there were a number of references to individual Ministers and officials, and it might be extremely embarrassing for those officials to bring them into prominence and to indicate the line which they had taken. He thought that it might save time if the committee forthwith ran through the report from this point of view.

After some discussion, it was evident that the other members of the committee felt that it was better that the committee should only undertake this examination with definite recommendations before it. Without a draft or alternative drafts of a report to the Council, the examination was bound to be much too long and discursive. The United Kingdom representative was therefore requested to proceed as originally proposed, and to endeavour to make recommendations to the committee at a further meeting on the 14th May.

J. C. STERNDAL BENNETT.

[E 3151/1/93]

No. 142.

*United Kingdom Delegate to Foreign Office.—(Received May 15.)*

(No. 40.)

THE United Kingdom delegate to the League of Nations presents his compliments, and has the honour to transmit copies of a note of the twenty-sixth meeting of the Assyrian Committee of the Council on the 8th May, 1934, of which a copy has been sent to His Majesty's Ambassador, Bagdad.

*United Kingdom Delegation,  
Geneva, May 12, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 142.

ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

*Record of the Twenty-Sixth Meeting of the Council Committee held on  
May 8, 1934, at 4.30 p.m.*

IN addition to the members of the committee the Iraqi representative attended. The members of the Commission of Enquiry were not present.

*The President*, addressing the Iraqi representative, said that the previous meetings of the committee at its present session had been employed in examining information supplied by the members of the Commission of Enquiry which had gone to Brazil, and in obtaining additional information from them. The results would be communicated to the Iraqi representative as soon as this work was finished. Meanwhile, the president recalled that, at the last meeting which the Iraqi representative had attended, the committee had agreed with him upon the text of a message to the Assyrians, which the committee had sent to the Iraqi Government to help them in preserving tranquillity. The committee would be very glad to learn what had been the result. Had the message actually been communicated and, if so, what impression had it created among the Assyrians? At a previous meeting the committee had also examined the monthly situation reports of the Iraqi Government and had asked Taufiq Beg for supplementary information on two points. One of these referred to the monthly expenditure on the refugee camp at Mosul; the other concerned the reconstruction of villages. On the first point, the committee had enquired what was the reason of the apparently large fluctuations in the amounts spent in different months on the refugee camp. On the other point, it had desired to find out whether all the villages wholly or partially destroyed last summer had been repaired or only those villages to which the Assyrians had declared their willingness to return. The committee would be glad to know whether the Iraqi representative was yet in a position to reply to these queries.

*The Iraqi Representative* thanked the committee for the information which he had already received regarding the work of the Commission of Enquiry in Brazil, namely, the preliminary report which had been furnished by Brigadier Browne. He would be equally glad to have as soon as possible the supplementary information to which the president referred. As regards the situation of the Assyrians in Iraq, this remained unchanged. The Assyrians were always in contact with the local authorities and with the local committee, under Major Thomson's presidency, which had been set up in agreement with the Council Committee. All the information available was contained in the periodical reports which he had communicated to the Council Committee. Of the two specific points which the president had mentioned, he would first take the question of expenses. He thought that Major Thomson had already explained the monthly fluctuations. Before January there had been expenses connected with Major Thomson's own movements and those had disappeared when he left Iraq on leave. The normal expenditure on the camp was in the region of £800 a month (i.e., £200 a week), and this did not change. In the circumstances he had not thought it worth while to ask his Government for any special explanation. On the other



hand, he had referred to them the question raised by the committee about the villages; but, allowing for the delay in his letter reaching Bagdad and in its communication to the local authorities for a report, he thought there had been scarcely time for a reply. He ought to receive the reply in about a fortnight's time and would, of course, at once pass it on. As regards the message to the Assyrians, he had been informed by the Iraqi Government that this had been sent to the Provincial Governor of Mosul with instructions to communicate it to the Assyrians. The date of his information was the 25th April. He thought, therefore, that he ought shortly to be receiving an account of the impression which the message had created on the Assyrians.

The *United Kingdom Representative* asked *Taufiq Beg* whether he would be prepared to remind his Government so as to make sure that he would receive information on this point. It was a matter which naturally interested the Council Committee considerably.

*Taufiq Beg* replied that he was sure that the Iraqi Government would inform him of the result of the communication of the message, as he had asked them to do so when sending it to them. He would, however, certainly remind them, so as to make sure that this was done.

The committee then adjourned to see a film of the Paraná area, which had been prepared during the visit of the Commission of Enquiry. The committee was joined for this purpose by Colonel Gaelzer-Netto, the representative in Berlin of the Brazilian Ministry of Labour, who had apparently been instructed by his Government to interest himself in the question of the immigration of the Assyrians to Brazil, and had taken the opportunity, while passing through Geneva, to establish contact with the Council Committee.

J. C. STERNDAL BENNETT.

[E 3203/10/93]

No. 143.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 16.)*

(No. 233.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, April 27, 1934.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 19 of the 10th January last, I have the honour to transmit herewith a translation<sup>(1)</sup> of a law which appeared in the *Official Gazette* of the 12th April last, providing for the formation of a reserve for the Iraqi army.

2. It appears to be intended that all officers and men joining the army shall do so, in future, upon an undertaking to serve for a specified period with both the colours and the reserve.

3. It is hoped, with the aid of a small gratuity, to induce a number of men who have already completed the colour service for which they enlisted to volunteer for further service with the reserve. The Ministry of Defence anticipate that it will be possible, under this law, to create a force of some three thousand trained men during the first year of its operation.

4. The law will be repealed as soon as the National Service Law has been brought into force and has created an adequate reserve for the conscript army.

5. The National Service Law itself has now passed through all its parliamentary stages, but the Royal iradah (mentioned in paragraph 5 of my despatch under reference) which is to bring it into force has not yet been issued.

6. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

[E 3178/58/34]

No. 144.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 16.)*

(No. 246.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, May 3, 1934.*

WITH reference to paragraph 3 of my despatch No. 192 of the 12th April last, I have the honour to inform you that, in reply to representations made by the Iraqi Legation at Tehran against the establishment of Persian posts on the Iraqi side of the frontier, the Persian Government recently stated, in a note, of which I enclose a copy, that they "do not acknowledge the official nature of the boundary demarcation protocol of 1914, and that they cannot consider the text of that protocol as a basis and authority for the definition and fixing of the boundary between Persia and Iraq."

2. This is not the first time that the Persian Government have given expression to this view, and I understand that, whenever the subject is discussed between the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Persian Minister, the latter invariably adverts to the Shatt-el-Arab as being the main bone of contention.

3. The Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs recently asked my advice in this matter, and I understand that the Iraqi Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran has now been instructed to address a note in reply to the Persian Government, a translation of which is also enclosed herewith. The third paragraph of this note states clearly that the Iraqi Government, whilst willing to resume discussion of the various draft treaties and agreements at present under discussion, can do so only on the understanding that the Iraqi-Persian frontier fixed by the protocol of 1914 shall not be called into question.

4. In conversation with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, I deprecated leaving this delicate matter entirely in the hands of an inexperienced Iraqi official at Tehran, and advised him to hand a copy of the note to the Persian Minister in Bagdad, and to leave him in no doubt that on this question the Iraqi Government are adamant.

5. Under article 2 of the Organic Law, no portion of Iraq's territories may be given up. An amendment of the Constitution would consequently be necessary before any revision of the frontier in favour of Persia could take place. No Iraqi Government would enter into such negotiations unless an adequate *quid pro quo* was likely to be obtainable. In the case of the Shatt-el-Arab the Iraqi Government and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have every reason for resisting to the utmost any proposal for revision.

6. What the Shah has in mind is apparently that the boundary between Iraq and Persia along that portion of the frontier which, according to the protocol of 1914, is marked by the left bank of the Shatt-el-Arab, should be the middle line of the river, that is, the line which is equidistant from both banks. This would be an impossible boundary in any case, as the deep channel in the Shatt-el-Arab constantly shifts from one side of the river to the other. Again, if the "thalweg" of the main stream was accepted as the boundary, laden ships could not navigate the river without appearing to enter and re-enter the territorial waters of both riparian States. Persia would thus be in a position to interfere with the trade of Basra, which is Iraq's only port.

7. The interests of His Majesty's Government would be no less seriously affected. In view of their financial interest in the port of Basra, His Majesty's Government cannot contemplate with equanimity any step which is likely seriously to diminish the prosperity of that port. Moreover, the greater part of the shipping using the waters of the Shatt-el-Arab is British, and, for this reason, it is highly undesirable that the Persian Government should obtain sovereign rights in any portion of the waterway itself.

8. There is a further consideration, which makes it essential from the point of view of His Majesty's Government that Iraq should retain sole sovereignty over the Shatt-el-Arab. Under clause 7 of the military annexure to the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1930, Iraq agrees to afford, when requested, all possible facilities for the movement of British forces, including the use of waterways, and, in particular, grants general permission for His Majesty's ships to visit the Shatt-el-Arab. If either the middle line of the river or the "thalweg" of the main stream were acknowledged as the boundary, these facilities to which His Majesty's Government attach great importance (see Air Ministry's letter



to the Colonial Office of the 8th December, 1931) could not be afforded by the King of Iraq without constant friction and interference by the Persian authorities.

9. In these circumstances, I recommend that the Iraqi Government should receive the full support of His Majesty's Government in resisting pressure from Persia. Should the Persian Government persist in their present attitude, it is for consideration whether the Iraqi Government would not be well advised to weigh carefully the possibilities of an appeal to the Council of the League under paragraph 2 of article 11 of the Covenant, and I should welcome an expression of your views on this aspect of the matter, especially on the question of the effect which such an appeal would be likely to have on the prospects of the proposed conservancy board.

10. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

Enclosure 1 in No. 144.

*Note from the Persian Government.*

IN answer to the letter of the Royal Iraqi Legation, dated the 23rd September, 1933, relating to the claim of the Legation regarding the construction by the Persian officials on the boundary of a fort to the west of Jabal Maimak, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Imperial Persian Government informs the Legation that the Legation has, in the said memorandum, taken as its authority the boundary demarcation protocol of 1914, and explained that the said fort had been built to the west of pillar 35, in a place called Imam Nai. The Ministry informs the Legation that the Imperial Persian Government does not acknowledge the official nature of the boundary demarcation protocol of 1914, and that it cannot consider the text of the said protocol as a basis and authority for the definition and fixing of the alignment of the boundary between the two Governments.

Enclosure 2 in No. 144.

*Iraqi Chargé d'Affaires to Persian Ministry for Foreign Affairs.*

(Translation.)

THE Royal Iraqi Legation present their compliments to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Imperial Persian Government, and, with reference to the Ministry's note, dated the 25th March, 1934, have the honour to enquire, whether, on referring to the document, of which they state they do not recognise the formal character, the Persian Government mean the Turco-Persian Frontier Delimitation Protocol, signed at Istanbul on the 4th November, 1913, and the annexures thereto, or the *procès-verbaux* of the meetings held by the Delimitation Commission during the period the 21st January to the 28th October, 1914, and the annexures thereto.

2. In accordance with instructions received by them from their Government, the Legation wish to point out to the honourable Ministry that the protocol signed at Istanbul on the 4th November, 1913, by, among others, his Excellency Prince Said Halim Pasha, Grand Vizier and Foreign Minister of the Ottoman Government, and Mirza Mahmud Khan Qajar Ihtisham-ul-Saltana, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Persian Government before the Ottoman Court, is held to be formal and binding. Further, having regard to the fifth and sixth provisions embodied in the protocol, the boundary line determined in 1914 and described in the *procès-verbaux* of the meetings and the annexures thereto, signed by the plenipotentiaries of the Ottoman and Persian Governments, is held to be finally and definitely fixed, and is no longer open to examination and rectification. Therefore, the Iraqi Government confirm the demands already made by them, and earnestly request the Persian Government

to issue urgent orders to Persian army detachments and "amniyah" (police) men to evacuate the posts of Imam Ni, Ilwa, Sharish, and Bujaila, constructed within the frontiers of Iraq.

3. Being satisfied as to the reality of the community of interests existing between the two countries, the Iraqi Government avail themselves of this opportunity to assure the Persian Government of their willingness to resume, on the basis of the finality of the demarcation in 1914, and in a spirit of true friendship, discussions of the treaties and agreements which have previously formed the subject of negotiation, subject to the condition that these negotiations shall not lead to any infringement of the sovereign rights of Iraq in any part of its territories or territorial waters, having regard to the above-mentioned (frontier) delimitation. The Iraqi Government believe in the possibility of a satisfactory solution being found for all the administrative difficulties outstanding between the two Governments, if the negotiations are carried out in an atmosphere permeated with a spirit of mutual friendship and goodwill.

The Legation avail, &c.

[E 3260/1/93]

No. 145.

[C.196.1934.VII.]

LEAGUE OF NATIONS: SETTLEMENT OF THE ASSYRIANS OF IRAQ.

*Report by the Committee to the Council.—(Received in Foreign Office, May 18.)*

THE committee for the settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq has continued actively to pursue its task since the last session of the Council with an acute sense of the seriousness of the issue involved and of the desirability of reaching a speedy solution. The committee believes that the exceptional nature of the task and the difficulties involved were fully realised by the Council when it set up the committee, in an endeavour to help the Iraqi Government, at the latter's request, by considering to what extent it was practicable to solve the problem of the Assyrians of Iraq by means of their settlement outside Iraq, in accordance with what was understood to be the desire of that population itself.

The early stages of the committee's work have already been described in the report submitted to and approved by the Council on the 19th January last, but, at the risk of some repetition, it may be useful now to give a general review of the problem which has faced the committee and the steps which it has so far taken, in order that the Council may appreciate the present position.

The duties assigned to the committee when it was set up on the 14th October last were two-fold:—

- (a) To consider whether the settlement outside Iraq of those Assyrians who might wish to leave that country would be possible in practice. If so, the committee was to take, in close co-operation with the Iraqi Government, all such steps as it might think fit with a view to the preparation and execution of a detailed scheme.
- (b) Eventually to examine, in consultation with the Iraqi Government and on the basis of reports furnished by the latter, the measures taken by that Government in order to give full effect to the Council's resolution of the 15th December, 1932, so far as concerned those Assyrians who might wish to remain in Iraq.

Furthermore, until the arrangements contemplated above had been put into effect, the Iraqi Government was asked by the Council to keep the committee regularly informed of the measures taken to ensure the safety of the Assyrians in Iraq, to assist the families left destitute in consequence of the events of last summer, and to rebuild those villages which had been wholly or partly destroyed in the course of those events.

The committee conceived its work to be (1) to endeavour to find land suitable for the accommodation of all the Assyrians of Iraq who might wish to emigrate; (2) to satisfy itself that the necessary finance would be forthcoming; (3) to ensure that the emigration should be entirely voluntary.



The first two of these tasks were bound to take time in view of the unfavourable economic and social conditions generally prevalent at the time throughout the world. It seemed to the committee necessary, therefore, in order to prevent misapprehension among the Assyrians, that the position should be explained to them. With this object and also with that of eventually ensuring the voluntary nature of the emigration, the committee in October last entered into negotiations with the Iraqi Government which resulted in the constitution by that Government of a local committee in Iraq, consisting of officials of the Iraqi Government and Assyrian village headmen, under the presidency of Major Thomson, who had, previous to the events of last summer, been engaged as settlement adviser to the Iraqi Government, in pursuance of the Council's resolution of the 15th December, 1932, and, since those events, has been responsible for the organisation and administration of the Assyrian refugee camp at Mosul. The duties of this committee were, in the first place, to explain the position to the Assyrians and subsequently, as soon as possible after a place of settlement had been definitely fixed, to ascertain which of the Assyrians desired to leave Iraq, and to take all necessary measures in connexion with their departure. The Iraqi Government agreed that, in the second and third of these tasks, a representative of the Nansen Office for Refugees should proceed to Iraq to collaborate with the local committee and with the local authorities.

According to information supplied to the Council Committee by the Iraqi Government, the local committee completed the first phase of its work between the 28th November and the 9th December of last year. Its procedure was to visit each of the qadhas in the north of Iraq in which the Assyrians are resident and to interview, assembled together in some convenient centre, leading Assyrians and the headmen of all the Assyrian villages in the qadha. At each interview the resolution passed by the Council on the 14th October last and the task of the committee set up in virtue of that resolution were explained, and the Assyrians were informed that a place of settlement had not yet been found and that a considerable period might elapse before the necessary arrangements were completed. In the meanwhile, they were advised to resume their normal life and to continue their agricultural activities, and they were assured that, when the time came, every head of a family would have perfect liberty to say whether he wished to go or not, and that those who wished to stay in Iraq would be free to do so, on the understanding that they would be bound to obey the laws of Iraq and to be loyal to the Iraqi Government.

The second and third tasks assigned to the local committee in collaboration with a representative of the Nansen Office cannot, of course, be undertaken until a place of settlement has been finally decided upon.

As regards the all-important question of finance, the committee drew the attention of the Council to the position in its report at the last session. It recalled that the Iraqi Government had declared itself ready to make as generous a contribution as its resources permitted, and that the question of the extent to which the Assyrians could themselves participate financially would be examined at the proper time; but it pointed out that, should the funds supplied by the Iraqi Government and the Assyrians prove inadequate, it would be necessary to seek other sources. The committee, further, drew attention to the fact that the United Kingdom Government had declared its willingness to pay its share of a League contribution, and the committee accordingly referred to the Council the question of the possibility of a League contribution.

The Council decided that a League contribution was, immediately, at all events, not practicable, and it took what appeared to be the only course open to it and appealed, in its resolution of the 19th January, to the generosity of Governments and private organisations to consider participating in the financing of an eventual settlement scheme, having regard more especially to the humanitarian aspect of the problem. Here again, however, it is unlikely that further substantial progress can be expected until a concrete scheme can be placed before the Governments and institutions concerned.

In its search for a suitable destination for the Assyrians, the committee felt bound to explore a wide field and there is no continent in the world in which it has not considered possibilities. It has approached those Governments whose territories appeared to offer favourable prospects, but in no case so far have the prospects proved on examination to be so promising as those held out by a scheme, brought to the notice of the committee at the very outset of its

work, by the Nansen Office, for settlement in Brazil on lands belonging to Paraná Plantations (Limited) in the State of Paraná. These lands had already been the subject of a report by M. Redard, counsellor of the Swiss Legation at Rio de Janeiro, who had been authorised by his Government, at an earlier date, to inspect them on behalf of the Nansen Office in connexion with the settlement of other refugees.

This report and preliminary discussions between the Nansen Office, acting on behalf of the Council Committee, and the company concerned showed that the area was sufficiently large to accommodate all the Assyrians of Iraq, and that, *prima facie*, the scheme offered the necessary elements of success. Before any progress could be made, however, the first step was to obtain the consent of the Brazilian Government. That Government was accordingly approached and, after considering the representations made to it by the committee regarding the urgency and humanitarian nature of the problem, generously declared itself ready in principle to accept all the Assyrians of Iraq in groups of 500 families at a time, as and when Paraná Plantations (Limited) was able to provide for their settlement.

Before discussing with the Brazilian Government the conditions of this settlement, there was a preliminary step which the committee felt bound to take. The transfer of a population from the north of Iraq to a region so different as the south of Brazil was naturally not an operation which the committee could embark upon without the greatest precaution. It was necessary to establish in the interests of all concerned, not only of the Assyrians themselves, but also of Brazil and of the League of Nations, that the climate and physical conditions were such that the Assyrians could be expected to adapt themselves and to settle down as a useful element in Brazil.

As the Council was informed at its last session, the committee accordingly decided to send out Brigadier-General Browne to the area in question with the object of advising the committee, in the light of his special knowledge of Assyrian needs and characteristics, whether the scheme proposed offered good prospects of success. Brigadier-General Browne was accompanied by Mr. Johnson, Secretary-General of the Nansen Office, and, by the courtesy of the Swiss Government, he was also assisted after his arrival in Brazil by M. Redard.

Brigadier-General Browne and Mr. Johnson were in Brazil from the 12th February to the 8th April, and the committee desires to record its high appreciation of the thorough and conscientious manner in which they and M. Redard carried out their task. After contact had been established with the Brazilian authorities in Rio de Janeiro, a preliminary visit was made to the land owned by Paraná Plantations (Limited) in North Paraná. The mission first inspected settlements already established in the neighbourhood of Londrina, where Paraná Plantations (Limited) has its headquarters, and satisfied itself by means of interviews with existing settlers of various nationalities (*e.g.*, Austrian, Czechoslovak, German, Italian, Japanese and Polish) that, in general, these settlers had succeeded in becoming self-supporting within about eight months of their arrival. The area which the company had offered for Assyrian settlement was some 66 kilom. south-west of Londrina. Most of it is still virgin forest, but by means of personal investigation, so far as the existing forest tracks would permit, and from information obtained from various sources, the mission satisfied itself that the conditions obtaining there were in all essential respects similar to those obtaining in the areas already cleared and settled, and it arrived at the unanimous conclusion that the area in question was suitable in all respects for Assyrian settlement. Having reported accordingly to the Council Committee, the mission proceeded to consider the scheme in detail. It paid a further visit to the area proposed and examined also a neighbouring area, which it found equally favourable. A film was taken to show the type of land and vegetation and the conditions under which existing settlers live.

An alternative area belonging to the same company in the Jangada region of the State of São Paulo was also examined and the conditions there were found in many respects similar to those in North Paraná.

The mission has furnished the Council Committee with a number of reports, accompanied by detailed annexes, dealing with all the aspects of the settlement, and has supplemented these reports orally at recent meetings with the committee in Geneva. The committee is still studying the various technical details and proposals involved, which it considers unnecessary, or at all events premature, at



this stage, to bring to the notice of the Council. The committee thinks, however, that the Council will be interested in the extracts from certain of the reports which form annexes 1 and 2<sup>(1)</sup> to the present report. The first is a chronological description by Brigadier-General Browne of the mission's journeyings in Brazil, while the second is taken from a technical report by Mr. Johnson and consists of a general description of the conditions in the proposed settlement area, together with a note on the results obtained by various existing settlers.

Before the mission left for Brazil a *questionnaire* had been drawn up for its guidance as regards the scope of its work. In coming to its conclusions, the mission followed closely the points of the *questionnaire*, and the following is a summary of its opinion under each heading:—

(1) *Climate.*

That the temperature, while not liable to violent extremes as in Iraq to which the Assyrians are accustomed, yet has a sufficient variation to be healthy. The rainfall is more than in Iraq and ensures that there are no droughts.

(2) *Cultivation.*

That the crops most easily cultivated in Paraná can be cultivated by the Assyrians.

(3) *Cattle and Sheep Raising and Pig Breeding.*

That a certain number of Assyrians have experience of cattle raising, while practically the whole nation is well acquainted with sheep and goat raising. So far in the Londrina area sheep raising has only been tried to a limited extent, but goats are plentiful and do well. The Assyrians should find no difficulty in pig breeding.

(4) *Agricultural Settlement Conditions.*

The mission was asked to enquire into the possibility of village settlements under conditions similar to those to which the Assyrians are accustomed. Settlement under these conditions is not excluded, but the mission, for a variety of reasons, recommends that the Assyrians should be settled, at the outset at all events, in groups of four families, each family to be allotted 5 *alqueires* of land, with a house for the four families at the point of contact of the four blocks of land. Each group of four families would thus be separated from the surrounding similar groups by about 750 metres. There would be ample opportunity and material for individual families to construct separate houses for themselves, should they desire to do so later.

The mission was asked whether 5 *alqueires* (roughly 12 hectares or 30 acres) a family was sufficient for the reasonable requirements of an Assyrian family. Its opinion was that 5 *alqueires* were sufficient in the first instance. Settlers, as they became more proficient and affluent, might extend their area, but any smaller amount in the first instance was not advisable.

Basing itself on the experience of existing settlers the mission considers that the Assyrians should become self-supporting on their land in eight months, and should have no difficulty in repaying the expenses of land purchase, settlement and transport in twelve years.

(5) *Occupations other than Agriculture.*

The first endeavour will be to put settlers on the land irrespective of their abilities in other directions. In their conversations with the competent Brazilian officials, as well as in their aide-memoire, to which reference is made later in this report, the mission explained that, although the majority of the Assyrians were agricultural or pastoral people, there were, nevertheless, a certain number who followed other occupations—such as carpenters, blacksmiths, builders and weavers of cloth—whose services could be usefully employed on the spot in the development of the proposed settlement without detriment to the national labour market.

The mission suggests that such of those Assyrians as cannot be so employed should pass a period of apprenticeship in an agricultural experimental station to be maintained in the settlement, or with qualified Assyrian agricultural families, before being definitely allotted their own holdings.

(<sup>1</sup>) Not printed.

(6) *Food.*

The mission was asked to ascertain whether the reasonable food requirements of the Assyrians could be satisfied at reasonable prices. It reported that, until the Assyrians were obtaining food from their own lands, their food requirements could be satisfied at reasonable prices.

(7) *Medical Attention.*

Satisfactory arrangements for medical attention can be made, and the general health throughout the area is satisfactory.

(8) *Religion.*

The mission was asked to ascertain whether the Assyrians would be allowed facilities for the practice of their religion. It replied that there is complete religious freedom throughout the country.

(9) *Schools.*

The mission was asked to ascertain whether the Assyrians would be allowed to establish their own schools. The reply was in the affirmative on condition that Portuguese was taught.

While the mission was in Brazil a certain opposition to Assyrian immigration manifested itself in the Brazilian Parliament and press. For the most part the opposition was clearly based on erroneous information regarding the Assyrians. The mission could not, of course, enter into public controversy, but it at once drew up an aide-memoire for personal communication to those interested, with the object of dissipating the misconceptions which were being so unfortunately spread. This aide-memoire contains so useful a description of the qualities of the Assyrians that the committee has decided to bring it to the notice of the Council and attaches it as annex 3<sup>(1)</sup> to this report.

The Brazilian Government set up a commission of enquiry into the objections raised to the reception of the Assyrians. Brigadier Browne's mission was received by this commission on the 6th April, and had the opportunity of drawing attention to some of the prevalent misconceptions regarding the Assyrians. A copy of the above-mentioned aide-memoire was handed to the commission.

To sum up, the position as regards the scheme for settlement in Paraná is that the Brazilian Government, when made aware of the grave problem with which the Council of the League is faced, declared, in January last, its readiness in principle to accept the Assyrians. Before proceeding further, the committee felt it necessary to assure itself that the Assyrians could be expected to adapt themselves to conditions in Paraná and to develop into an element useful to Brazil. As a result of Brigadier Browne's mission it is now satisfied that given goodwill, initiative and energy on the part of the Assyrians, which there is no reason to doubt, there is every cause to believe that they would thrive in the area concerned. The transfer of so large a population raises, however, problems more difficult than is generally realised, and it is yet too early for the committee to express an opinion whether the scheme for settlement in Brazil can be put into effect. The next step will be to enter into detailed negotiations with the Brazilian Government as soon as circumstances permit, in the hope of working out a plan acceptable to that Government.

The committee is mindful of the need of the earliest possible solution in view of the present unsettled condition of the Assyrians in Iraq. Some 1,500 persons, mostly women and children who were rendered destitute by the events of last summer, are still being maintained by the Iraqi Government in the refugee camp at Mosul, but, in addition, a large number of Assyrians who fled to Mosul have so far shown themselves unwilling to return to their villages, and are at present living mainly on the charity of their relatives and friends. The committee has received from the Iraqi Permanent Delegate the two letters which form annexes 4 and 5<sup>(1)</sup> to this report dealing with the measures of security and relief taken in the months of December, January and February by the Iraqi Government in the case of those who have returned to the villages which they had previously abandoned. The committee has several times discussed the situation with the

(<sup>1</sup>) Not printed.



representative of Iraq, whom it has asked to furnish further information on certain points arising out of the reports, notably as to whether the statement regarding the reconstruction of villages referred to all villages which had been occupied by Assyrians prior to the events of last summer, or only to those villages to which the Assyrians had since declared their willingness to return. This point appeared to the committee to be of considerable importance in connexion with a request which the Iraqi representative made that the committee should help to relieve the situation by issuing a message to the Assyrians. The committee decided to accede to this request, and it has the honour to submit to the Council as an annex to this report (annex 6<sup>(1)</sup>) a copy of a note addressed on the 9th April to the Iraqi representative after a meeting with him, which was attended also by Major Thomson, then on leave from Iraq and on the eve of returning to his post. This note enclosed a message to the Assyrians recommending them to pursue their normal life and not to dispose of their goods, but, on the contrary, to proceed with the cultivation of their lands pending emigration. The note made it clear, however, that in authorising the communication of this message to the Assyrians the committee relied implicitly on the Iraqi Government to take all possible measures for the well-being and protection of the Assyrians and for the maintenance of stability and order in the areas where they might reside until emigration should be possible.

The committee has now been informed by the Iraqi representative that the Iraqi Government has arranged for the communication of the message to the Assyrians.

*Geneva, May 15, 1934.*

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

[E 3256/1/93]

No. 146.

*United Kingdom Delegate to Foreign Office.—(Received May 18.)*

(No. 44.)

THE United Kingdom delegate to the League of Nations presents his compliments, and has the honour to transmit copy of a record of the twenty-seventh meeting of the Council Committee on the 14th May, respecting the Assyrian question, of which a copy has been sent to His Majesty's Ambassador, Bagdad.

*United Kingdom Delegation,  
Geneva, May 16, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 146.

ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

*Record of the Twenty-seventh Meeting of the Council Committee held on May 14 at 3.30 P.M.*

THE committee considered a draft report to the Council.

The *United Kingdom Representative* said that, since drafting the report, a certain number of suggestions had been made to him, and he had prepared amendments to meet these. The general object of the amendments was to guard against giving too optimistic an impression as regards the possibility of putting the Brazilian scheme into effect and to make it clear that, although the Brazilian scheme seemed entirely suitable from the physical point of view, the difficulties were greater than generally realised.

The amendments proposed were agreed to and the report adopted.

The *United Kingdom Representative* suggested that, before the present session of the committee ended, it would be advisable to send to the Spanish Ambassador a copy of Major Johnson's report for confidential information, and also to authorise the Ambassador to communicate to the Brazilian Government a copy of the committee's report to the Council. Furthermore, although the committee had decided at a previous meeting not at this stage to address the Spanish

Ambassador on a number of details raised by Brigadier Browne's and Major Johnson's reports, there were one or two points to which it had been thought advisable to draw his attention. The United Kingdom representative had drawn up the draft of a despatch to the Spanish Ambassador to give effect to what he believed to be the committee's wishes.

The draft despatch was adopted.

The *President* then informed the committee that, after its last meeting, he had had a conversation with Colonel Gaelzer-Netto. The latter had explained that he represented the Brazilian Ministry of Labour in Europe in regard to questions of immigration, and he was then, in fact, on his way to Marseilles in order to inspect a party of emigrants on their way from China to Brazil. He had taken the opportunity to establish contact in Geneva with the Council Committee.

The *President* had said that, had he had notice of the visit, he would, of course, have arranged for Colonel Gaelzer-Netto to meet the committee. He had then tried to find out what exactly Colonel Gaelzer-Netto's position was and in what manner he proposed to concern himself with the Assyrian question. Colonel Gaelzer-Netto had said that before leaving Brazil recently to return to Europe he had received orders from the President of Brazil to concern himself with the Assyrian question and even to go to Iraq to make a selection of the Assyrians. He stated that he had not carried out these instructions owing to the political situation in Brazil. He mentioned that a commission had been set up there to enquire into Assyrian immigration, and he said that two members of this commission would certainly be against immigration. He also intimated that, unless he himself went to Iraq to select the Assyrians on the spot, it was quite useless for the League to suppose that they would ever be allowed to enter Brazil. He further said that it would have been easier for the Brazilian Government to admit the Assyrians before the presidential election rather than afterwards, as the Government had hitherto had dictatorial powers and these, after the election, would be much modified and no decision would be possible without the consent of Parliament.

Towards the end of the interview Colonel Gaelzer-Netto had appeared to take the line of suggesting that it would be to the committee's advantage to arrange with the Brazilian Government that he should be sent to Iraq. From this and from his general manner, M. Olivan felt some doubt whether he had, in fact, received specific orders to concern himself with the question or to go to Iraq. It seemed possible that, being concerned with emigration questions in general and having heard of the proposal to settle the Assyrians in Brazil, he had rather wished to be concerned with the question. The *President* had, therefore, while expressing readiness to maintain contact with him, intimated that a good deal yet remained to be done before the question of a visit to Iraq could be usefully considered.

Mr. Walters said that the League had heard of Colonel Gaelzer-Netto previously, as the colonel had some weeks ago informed the Nansen Office, from Berlin, that he had been instructed to concern himself with the Assyrian question and had asked for certain information concerning it. A collection of official documents had been made, and the Nansen Office had sent it to Colonel Gaelzer-Netto with an intimation that they would be glad to supply any further information which he desired.

The *President* observed that it was not at all clear what Colonel Gaelzer-Netto's position was, and he simply wished for the moment to bring to the committee's notice the conversation which he had had with him.

It was agreed that it should be left to the *President* to decide the date of the next meeting, it being realised that no further progress could be made until after the presidential election in Brazil and after the receipt of a report from the Spanish Ambassador on the prospects of making progress.

J. C. STERNDAL BENNETT.

*Geneva, May 16, 1934.*



[E 3303/1/93]

No. 147.

*United Kingdom Delegate to Foreign Office.—(Received May 22.)*

(No. 53.)

THE United Kingdom delegate to the League of Nations presents his compliments, and has the honour to transmit copy of a despatch from the President of the Assyrian Committee to the Spanish Ambassador, Rio de Janeiro, dated the 15th May, respecting the Assyrian question, of which a copy has been sent to His Majesty's Ambassadors at Bagdad and Rio de Janeiro.

*United Kingdom Delegation, Geneva,  
May 18, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 147.

*President of Assyrian Committee to Spanish Ambassador, Rio de Janeiro.*

(Confidentiel.)

M. l'Ambassadeur,

*Société des Nations, Genève,**Le 15 mai 1934.*

COMME suite à ma dépêche du 10 avril dernier, relative à l'établissement des Assyriens de l'Irak, j'ai l'honneur de porter à la connaissance de votre Excellence que le Comité du Conseil a discuté avec le Général de Brigade Browne et le Major Johnson les conclusions de l'enquête récente à laquelle ils ont procédé, avec M. Redard, au sujet du projet d'établissement sur des terres appartenant à la Paraná Plantations Limited.

2. Je crois savoir que le Général Browne, avant son départ du Brésil, vous a communiqué copie du rapport définitif de la mission et le Comité du Conseil me prie maintenant de vous transmettre l'exemplaire ci-joint<sup>(1)</sup> d'un rapport supplémentaire (avec copie de l'annexe 1<sup>(1)</sup>) à ce rapport) que le Major Johnson a rédigé, depuis lors, sur les aspects techniques, administratifs et financiers de la question. Ce rapport ainsi que le rapport définitif de la mission ne sont pas destinés, pour le moment tout au moins, à être publiés et doivent donc être considérés comme confidentiels.

3. Votre Excellence se rappellera à cet égard que, dans le premier paragraphe de ma dépêche du 10 avril, il était indiqué que le Général Browne avait été autorisé à communiquer aux autorités brésiliennes la première partie du rapport préliminaire qu'il avait transmis au Comité du Conseil sous couvert de sa lettre du 10 mars. Le Général Browne vient de faire savoir au comité qu'il avait cru judicieux de ne pas utiliser cette autorisation et qu'il s'était borné à porter à la connaissance des Ministres intéressés la substance du rapport préliminaire, sans leur en laisser copie. C'est là un fait que sans doute votre Excellence n'ignore pas, mais, afin d'éviter tout malentendu, le Général Browne a demandé qu'il soit mentionné dans la présente communication. Il ne semble pas nécessaire, au stade actuel, de communiquer au Gouvernement brésilien le rapport préliminaire.

4. Le Comité du Conseil me charge, toutefois, de vous demander de bien vouloir communiquer au Gouvernement brésilien copie du rapport, en date du 15 mai, qu'il a lui-même présenté au Conseil. Un exemplaire de ce rapport<sup>(1)</sup> est joint à la présente dépêche et vous constaterez qu'il renferme des extraits du rapport définitif de la mission et du rapport du Major Johnson.

5. Après avoir examiné les divers rapports fournis par la mission et après avoir discuté personnellement le problème avec le Général Browne et le Major Johnson, le comité ne croit pas qu'il soit nécessaire de modifier en aucune façon ma dépêche du 10 avril. Son attention a naturellement été attirée sur divers détails qu'il y aura peut-être lieu de discuter plus tard avec le Gouvernement brésilien, mais, pour la majeure partie, il préfère ne pas entrer dans ces détails avant que les négociations engagées avec le Gouvernement brésilien ne soient entrées dans une phase plus officielle. Il se borne, en conséquence, pour le moment, à attirer l'attention de votre Excellence sur les deux points suivants :

6. En ce qui concerne la première des conditions stipulées par le Gouvernement brésilien (voir paragraphe 26 de ma dépêche du 10 avril), votre

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

Excellence pourra faire savoir que le comité est prêt à examiner la suggestion de la mission, suivant laquelle les Assyriens qui ne se livrent pas à l'agriculture ou à l'élevage et dont les services ne peuvent être utilement employés pour le développement de la colonie projetée devraient faire un apprentissage dans une station agricole expérimentale qui serait organisée dans la colonie ou auprès de familles d'agriculteurs assyriens qualifiés, avant qu'on leur octroie définitivement des terres.

7. Le paragraphe 27 de ma dépêche du 10 avril déclarait, à propos de la seconde condition brésilienne, que le comité serait reconnaissant au Gouvernement brésilien si celui-ci croyait pouvoir accorder aux Assyriens certaines gratuités de transport par chemin de fer. Le comité vient d'apprendre que le transport gratuit sur tous les chemins de fer brésiliens est, d'une manière générale, accordé aux immigrants et qu'en fait les autorités compétentes ont laissé entendre à la mission que les immigrants avaient droit au transport gratuit par voie ferrée jusqu'à leur lieu de destination et qu'il n'y avait pas lieu de supposer que cette faveur serait refusée aux Assyriens.

8. Le comité reconnaît pleinement qu'il ne peut être réalisé que peu ou point de progrès dans la voie de l'établissement des Assyriens au Brésil avant l'élection présidentielle. Il serait, toutefois, reconnaissant de tout ce que votre Excellence pourrait faire ultérieurement pour hâter la solution de la question et il serait heureux de recevoir, à une date aussi rapprochée que possible, vos observations sur les points soulevés dans ma dépêche du 10 avril, et d'être informé par télégramme dès que vous considérerez que le moment est favorable à l'ouverture officielle des négociations avec le Gouvernement brésilien.

Veuillez, &amp;c.

Le Président du Comité pour l'Etablissement  
des Assyriens de l'Irak,  
LOPEZ OLIVAN.

[E 3368/16/93]

No. 148.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 24.)*

(No. 251.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, May 3, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to report, in continuation of my despatch No. 228 of the 26th April last, that the Senate passed the draft Law for Expenditure on Capital Works after removing the provision permitting the Minister of Finance to effect transfers from one article of the law to another. I will forward a revised copy of the law in its final form as soon as it is published.

I have, &amp;c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

[E 3369/326/93]

No. 149.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 24.)*

(No. 253.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, May 8, 1934.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 126 of the 7th March last, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy<sup>(1)</sup> of the General Budget Law for the financial year 1934-35, accompanied by two statements<sup>(1)</sup> showing the estimated receipts and expenditure for the current financial year in the form in which they have been approved by Parliament.

2. The estimates underwent very little change during their passage through Parliament. The figures are as follows:—

	I.D.
Revenue ... ..	3,818,807
Expenditure ... ..	3,813,197
Surplus ... ..	5,610

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.



3. Although the 5 per cent. cut in salaries and allowances of officers and employees, which was introduced as a crisis measure during 1930, is being applied in full during the financial year, special consideration has been shown to military and civil pensioners, for whom the cut has been reduced from 5 per cent. to 2½ per cent. Provision is also made in the law, somewhat belatedly, for the grant of exchange compensation allowance to Iraqi diplomatic and consular officials and employees abroad, in consequence of the fall in the gold value of sterling. The law makes it incumbent upon the Government to complete a cadre for the civil service, a difficult task which has been spasmodically attempted for some years. The Government undertook to do this in their published programme, but it is doubtful whether anything permanent will come of it.

4. The debates, although absorbing a good deal of the time of both Houses, did not arouse much interest either in Parliament or in the press. No radical changes of policy were introduced, and there was little scope for determined opposition. The question of the railways, as usual, attracted attention, and the desirability of obtaining their transfer to the Iraqi Government free of charge was urged by many speakers. A tribal delegate came forward with a bold suggestion to the effect that the Iraqi Currency Board should be transferred to Iraq in order to safeguard the Iraqi currency against "the effects of possible economic upheaval abroad," but his proposal did not acquire any support. The vote containing the allotment for Assyrian relief (6,000 I.D.) brought protests from a number of Deputies, but the necessity for continuing the relief until the future of the Assyrians is settled was adequately presented by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the vote, which only provides for maintenance of the refugee camp for six months, was passed without further discussion. An attack was also made during the discussion on the budget of the Police Department regarding the annual payment made by the Government to the paramount Sheikh of Anaiza, Sheikh Mahruth-al-Hadhal (12,000 I.D.), in return for the service he renders to the Government in keeping the peace in his area. It was promised on behalf of the Government that when they are able to maintain an adequate police force which will be able to take over the responsibilities undertaken by the sheikh, the allowance will cease.

5. A sum of 15,107 I.D. has been added to the estimated revenue on account of amounts to be collected for police services. This is merely a contra entry necessitated by the revised accounting arrangements for the cost of Railway Police Services, which are now to be borne on the general estimates on a basis of recovery from the railways, instead of being a final charge, as hitherto, on the railway estimates. The provision for police expenditure has been increased by an equivalent amount. With this exception, the figures of revenue remain as they were submitted by the Minister of Finance.

6. A number of minor adjustments have been made in the estimated figures of expenditure. The vote for the Ministry of Economics and Communications has been relieved of the cost of the Survey Department, which has been transferred bodily to the vote for the Irrigation Department, under whose control it now comes. Otherwise, there is nothing calling for particular comment, and the estimates have been passed practically in the shape in which the previous Government prepared them.

7. The Budget Law also deals with the receipts and expenditure of the Port of Basra, the railways, the Fao Bar Dredging Service, and the Iraqi Currency Board. A separate despatch will be sent dealing with these services, with the exception of the last named, which contains nothing calling for comment. It is important to note that Parliament have inserted a condition, in the law regarding the railway estimates, to the effect that expenditure on the railways shall be "subject to Government control," and that the schedule of dues and charges is to receive the approval of the Government. If the Ministry of Finance intend to interpret these wide powers at all rigorously, the working of the railways may be severely handicapped.

8. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

[E 3377/845/93]

No. 150.

Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 24.)

(No. 258.)

Sir,

Bagdad, May 9, 1934.

I HAVE the honour to report that a law amending the Press Law of the 9th July, 1933, has been passed by the Iraqi Parliament and came into force on the 8th May—the date of its publication in the Arabic edition of the official *Government Gazette*. This measure is intended to strengthen the Government's control over the local press and to render it easier for them to suspend or suppress offending newspapers and other publications.

2. I enclose herein a translation<sup>(1)</sup> of the amending law as finally passed by the two Houses of the Iraqi Parliament, together with a memorandum<sup>(2)</sup> on the changes which it introduces in the existing law. The existing Press Law (No. 57, of 1933), which was enacted on the 9th July, 1933, during Rashid Ali's administration, is available to you in the English edition of the Iraqi official *Government Gazette* No. 39 of the 24th September, 1933. For convenience of reference I attach one copy of the English text of this law<sup>(3)</sup>.

3. The recent history of the Iraqi Press Law, leading up to its present amendment, is of interest since it shows how all Iraqi Cabinets, however liberal the expressed views of their individual members when in opposition, are compelled to give themselves wide powers to curb the exuberance of local journalism. In 1932 Nuri Pasha's Government were so persistently attacked that they were obliged to pass an amending law (Law No. 56, of the 2nd June, 1932), which tightened up very considerably the Press Law of 1931. Their action was bitterly criticised by the extreme Nationalist Opposition, and when the latter came into office they fulfilled their promises by repealing the existing 1931 law as it stood amended by Nuri Pasha's law of 1932. This proved to be mere face-saving on the part of Rashid Ali and his friends since, in the Press Law of the 9th July, 1933, which they passed in its place, they proceeded to give themselves powers almost as arbitrary and restrictive as those conferred by the old law. Nevertheless, the Madfai Government have now found the 1933 law inadequate and full of loopholes which permit local trouble makers to evade official control and to continue their scurrilous propaganda. Consequently, they have been obliged to strengthen Rashid Ali's law by the present amending law, which reintroduces several provisions contained in Nuri Pasha's law of 1932, which were omitted by the Nationalist Government when they passed their own measure last July.

4. As might be expected, the present amending law has met with the violent disapproval of the vernacular press of all shades. It was also heavily attacked in the Chamber of Deputies by the more irresponsible elements, but succeeded in passing its three readings without amendment. The Senate, however, introduced three important clauses (underlined in the enclosed translation of the law) which were subsequently accepted by the Government and approved by the Chamber. These additions are commented upon together with the remainder of the measure in the attached memorandum, but it is worth mentioning that the clause providing that no newspaper "self-declared to be the organ of an authorised political party" may be suspended without a court judgment was received with acclamation by the newspapers which are generally considered to represent political parties and with severe disapproval by *Sart-al-Ahali* (alias *Al Ahali*), whose views are of a more sinister hue than those of any authorised Iraqi political party.

5. The present measure should facilitate the suppression of campaigns of abuse and calumny against the policy of His Majesty's Government and British interests such as have occurred in the past. It should, for example, no longer be possible for *Al Ahali*, suspended last March as a result of a recrudescence of its anti-British campaign (see my despatch No. 149 of the 15th March last), to reappear forthwith as *Sart-al-Ahali* under identical management and to continue its activities without hindrance. I had occasion to protest once more to the Minister for Foreign Affairs about this journal on the 13th April on

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.



account of its attacks on British officials in the Iraqi Government, and his Excellency assured me that I should not have any cause for further complaint after the new amending law had been enacted and had provided the Government with the additional powers of which they stood in need.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

[E 3375/215/93]

No. 151.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 24.)*

(No. 263.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, May 10, 1934.*

WITH reference to paragraph 7 of my despatch No. 253 of the 8th May last, I have the honour to transmit herewith two statements<sup>(1)</sup> of the budget estimates of the port of Basra in the form in which they have been passed by the Iraqi Parliament.

2. The figures, as compared with those of the financial year which has just closed, are as follows:—

	Revenue.	Expenditure.	Surplus.
	I.D.	I.D.	I.D.
Estimates, 1933-34 ...	253,200	246,500	6,700
Estimates, 1934-35 ...	261,500	259,190	2,310

3. Increased receipts are budgeted for under the heading "Marine Revenue," as it is anticipated that vessels entering the port will be of deeper draft and will carry increased tonnage. The small increase in expenditure is due to more funds being allocated for expenditure on maintenance of machinery, buildings and roads, and for the execution of sundry minor works.

4. Full provision has been made for the payment of the twelfth of the thirty annual instalments of the capital debt, and interest thereon, due to His Majesty's Government. The amount is 35,160 I.D. Full allowance has also been made for the normal annual depreciation of the capital assets which have been financed from the reserve funds of the port, involving a charge of 5,500 I.D.

5. The results of the past financial year are expected to show an actual surplus of approximately 14,000 I.D., and there is every reason to suppose that the estimates prepared by the Port Director for the current year will be realised, and that the payment due on the 25th March next to His Majesty's Government will be made without difficulty from revenue.

6. I also have the honour to transmit herewith two statements<sup>(1)</sup> one of estimated revenue and one of estimated expenditure, for the Fao Bar Dredging Service for the financial year, which form an annexure to the Iraqi General Budget Law. The figures, as compared with those of the past year, are as follows:—

	Revenue.	Expenditure.	Surplus.	Deficit.
	I.D.	I.D.	I.D.	I.D.
Estimates, 1933-34 ...	194,140	192,540	1,600	...
Estimates, 1934-35 ...	172,316	245,890	...	73,574

A note in the Budget Law states that the deficit will be met from the reserve funds of the service.

7. These estimates show important differences from those of preceding years. Now that the original loan of 462,000 I.D., with interest at 6 per cent. per annum, taken from the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (Limited), has been fully repaid, the amortisation charges have disappeared from the estimates, and the benefit resulting therefrom is being distributed to the shipping using the dredged channel by a general reduction of 25 per cent. in the scale of dredging dues charged, involving a remission of approximately 60,000 I.D. The Anglo-Persian Oil Company will benefit to the extent of about 55,000 I.D. from this remission.

8. The Government have also decided, now that the service is free from debt, to accept the repeated recommendations of the Port Director to provide a

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

third dredger for the channel in order to relieve the strain on the two existing dredgers and to provide for emergencies. The present intention is to finance the purchase of the dredger from the resources of the Dredging Service itself, and provision has therefore been made in the estimates for expenditure of 115,000 I.D. on this account. It is hoped that the new dredger will be ready to begin operations at the beginning of the next financial year.

9. The surplus and reserve funds from which the resultant deficit on the year's estimates is to be met exceed 80,000 I.D., and the financial proposals of the Government in this regard should be attended with but little difficulty, particularly as the figures of revenue have been calculated on the basis of a 30 per cent. reduction in rates, as recommended by the Port Director, instead of the 25 per cent. reduction approved by the Government.

10. The Port Director has also submitted proposals for capital works expenditure from the surplus funds of the port of Basra involving expenditure of about 50,000 I.D., spread out over two years, the bulk of which is to be devoted to the construction of a modern air port on port land at Magil. The Government still have these proposals under consideration.

11. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

[E 3354/3177/34]

No. 152.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 24.)*

(No. 264.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, May 10, 1934.*

IN a private letter to Mr. Rendel of the 8th March, 1933 (a copy of which I sent to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran), I commented upon Persian allegations to the effect that the Auromani Kurds under the family of Jafar Sultan were receiving encouragement from the Iraqi side of the frontier in their hostilities with the Persian Government forces.

2. The Persian authorities have recently resumed their operations against the surviving members of this tribe and have effected a concentration of troops in the vicinity of the Iraqi-Persian frontier. This action appears to have broken the last resistance of the Auromanis, who have either scattered to the more inaccessible parts of the mountains or fled for safety into Iraq. I understand that only two of the prominent Auromani leaders—Ahmed Beg (son of Jafar Sultan) and Hama Rashid—are still at large in Persia, and they are believed to be hiding somewhere on or near the frontier.

3. The stream of refugees into Iraqi territory is proving a source of some embarrassment to the Iraqi Government, and detachments of police and military have been specially drafted into the Halabja area to assist the local authorities in rounding up these unwelcome visitors. The operations are under the personal command of the Director-General of Police. Fortunately the Auromanis display no hostility towards the Iraqi forces and thirty-six of them (including Tawfiq Beg, grandson of Jafar Sultan) have been arrested and interned at Sulaimaniyah. It is understood that the Persian Government intend to ask for their extradition, but the Iraqi Government are disposed to treat them as political prisoners in the same way as Jafar Sultan himself, who is now residing under supervision at Ramadi.

4. In addition to their embarrassment at this influx of refugees the Iraqi Government are alarmed at the numbers of the armed forces which the Persians have concentrated on the frontier in the neighbourhood of Halabja and Penjwin, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me recently that the Persian Minister had given him the impression that the troops might wish to follow the rebels across the frontier into Iraq. His Excellency said that the Iraqi Government would not, of course, tolerate any such infraction of their territorial sovereignty.

5. In order to assist the Iraqi authorities to obtain the fullest information about the movements and designs of the Persian troops in this area, Dr. Damluji



asked me whether it would be possible for him to be supplied with extracts from the reports furnished by the Royal Air Force liaison officer at Sulaimaniyah. This request provided me with an excellent opportunity to justify to his Excellency the retention of the air liaison officer in the Sulaimaniyah district, and I have arranged with the Air Officer Commanding for extracts from the reports to be supplied to the Iraqi Ministry for Foreign Affairs through His Majesty's Embassy.

6. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

[E 3516/1752/93]

No. 153.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 29.)*

(No. 267.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, May 15, 1934.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 190 of the 12th April last, I have the honour to report that a Mr. L. C. Patterson, a British director of the British Oil Development Company (although his name is new to me), has paid a visit to Bagdad on behalf of the company, and in the course of a conversation with me he confirmed that the additional money required to enable the dead rent payment due to the Iraqi Government on the 1st January this year to be made was supplied by the Italian group.

2. He also informed me that the consideration obtained by the Italian group for providing the extra funds was the transfer to themselves, from the British and French groups, of additional shares and voting power in the company, which has thereby given them the largest international holding in the company. The distribution of the shares now seems to be as follows:—

	Percentage.
British group	42
Italian group	46
German group	12

The method whereby this has been done is not clear, as Mr. Patterson informed Mr. Wheatley, the adviser to the Ministry of Economics and Communications, that the redistribution is only temporary, and that he hoped that the previous balance would eventually be restored. If this statement is correct, it is possible that the additional money advanced by the Italian group is being regarded as a repayable loan carrying voting power until such time as it is repaid. The position of the French group is also obscure, but it appears certain that at the present time the Italian group has succeeded the British group in the position of majority shareholder in the company.

3. Mr. Patterson informed me that he feared that the company would have the greatest difficulty in finding the necessary cash to meet the dead rent payment due to the Iraqi Government on the 1st January next, unless oil in sufficient marketable quantities is found in the meanwhile. Success in this direction seems doubtful, although the company intend to accelerate their drilling programme and to set up three new drilling rigs in September. Machinery for these rigs is being supplied by the German group as satisfaction in kind of their share of the dead rent payment made last month.

4. Mr. Patterson asked me whether I thought that the Iraqi Government would be likely to come to the assistance of the company in the matter of the next payment either by reducing the amount to be paid or by extending the period of grace. I said that I thought that the present Government would certainly decline to help in the manner which he had indicated, as they were too fearful of criticism in Parliament and outside. If a really strong Government came into power before the end of the year and could be convinced that a moratorium or a reduction of the dead rent was in the interests of Iraq as well as the company, it was possible, though unlikely, that some help might be forthcoming. I remarked that the root of the trouble was that the company had undertaken to pay far too high a dead

rent for a field which was not only undeveloped, but the potential wealth of which was still a matter of guesswork, although I sympathised with the company's difficulties and would do my best to help them.

5. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

[E 3525/3525/93]

No. 154.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 29.)*

(No. 282.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, May 17, 1934.*

WITH reference to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes's despatch No. 550 of the 22nd August last, I have the honour to report that the "Ordinance for the Cancellation of Iraqi Nationality," No. 62 of the 15th August, 1933, has now been approved by the Iraqi Parliament in accordance with paragraph 3 of article 26 of the Iraqi Constitution. Consequently, it now definitely obtains the force of law.

2. I enclose a translation of a notification by the Prime Minister, published in the official Government *Gazette*, that the ordinance has been so approved. The translation of the ordinance, which was forwarded in Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes's despatch under reference, was taken from the vernacular press, but an authoritative text is available to you in the English edition of the Iraqi Government *Gazette* No. 39 of the 24th September, 1933.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

Enclosure in No. 154.

*Extract from Al Waqayi-al-Iraqiyah No. 1354 dated May 7, 1934.*

NOTIFICATION BY THE PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS.

*Official Notification.*

IT is hereby notified that Ordinance No. 62 of 1933, issued for deprivation of Iraqi nationality, has been approved by Parliament.

JAMIL-AL-MADFAI, *Prime Minister.*

*Bagdad, Muharram 17, 1353, and May 2, 1934.*

[E 3526/190/93]

No. 155.

*Memorandum respecting British Commercial Interests in Iraq.—(Communicated by His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad; Received May 29.)*

PRIOR to the war Great Britain occupied a paramount position in the trade of what is now Iraq. Of the total import trade of the country the United Kingdom's share was between 45 and 50 per cent., and that of India about 25 per cent.; while the United Kingdom was also the principal customer, taking some 35 per cent. of the exports. Trade was for the most part in the hands of old and well-established British firms, such as Lynch Brothers, Gray, Mackenzie and Co., and Frank C. Strick and Co., though in the period immediately preceding the war



two or three German firms had made their appearance in Basra and Bagdad and showed signs of becoming serious competitors. The bulk of the shipping serving the port of Basra was under the British flag, and river transport, providing the quickest and most economical means of communication between Basra and Bagdad, was carried on by the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company, a British firm. Individual British traders (British Indians engaged in retail trade) were few in number, and their influence on the current of trade was negligible.

The early post-war period was a time of dislocation of trade in abnormal conditions, which may, indeed, be said to have prevailed, with a gradual but insufficiently marked tendency towards rectification, up to the year 1926. In that year a collapse occurred, and many unsound businesses were eliminated; in the two succeeding years long overdue adjustments of the country's economy came about, and from 1929 onwards a process of consolidation has been in progress, which has enabled Iraq to face the universal economic depression and the fall in the world prices of agricultural produce, her principal source of income, without recourse to measures in restriction of imports, and without disastrous results. In the three years ending with the financial year 1932-33, Iraq's total trade, exclusive of transit trade, has amounted annually to approximately £8,500,000. In these years the visible adverse balance of trade has varied considerably, but this variation can be traced to special circumstances. When allowance is made for these the normal visible adverse balance can be placed at £1,500,000 annually, the normal visible balance in favour of the United Kingdom being about £850,000.

The United Kingdom's share of the import trade, though showing a distinct falling-off as compared with pre-war years, has remained remarkably steady throughout the post-war period, averaging 35 per cent., with a maximum percentage of 39.2 in 1920-21, and a minimum of 26.33 in 1925-26. Her share of the export trade was not equally consistent, owing to special and non-recurring conditions, which obtruded themselves from time to time. Normally, it would stand, in the post-war period, at 20 per cent. of the total. In 1932-33, the latest year for which statistics are available, the United Kingdom provided 34.92 per cent. of Iraq's imports, while taking 37.36 per cent. of her exports. The latter figure was, however, unnaturally swollen by the export of £500,000 worth of gold, more than half the total value of Iraq's exports to the United Kingdom. Imports from the United Kingdom in that year amounted in value to £2,179,000.

These figures and percentages, satisfactory as they are in themselves and in comparison with similar percentages in respect of the external trade with the United Kingdom of adjacent foreign countries, do not by any means fully represent the importance of British interests, other than political, in Iraq in general. These other interests are in the main of post-war growth.

His Majesty's Government are themselves directly concerned with the port of Basra and the Iraq Railway Administration. In the case of the port, their interest, though gradually decreasing, will not be finally extinguished for another nineteen years. The Iraqi railways are actually the property of His Majesty's Government, whose ownership thereof will eventually be transferred to a railway corporation controlled by a board of British and Iraqi directors, in return for preferred stock to be issued by the corporation of the nominal value of some £2 million. The directors of both of these administrations are British, and their technical and administrative staffs are composed predominantly of British subjects. At the present time British subjects in the service of the Iraqi Railways Administration and of the Port Administration number respectively seventy-four and fifty-five, exclusive of British Indians occupying subordinate positions.

This aspect of British interests in Iraq, the employment provided for British subjects, should be given full weight in considering also the details which follow concerning British commercial activities in the country.

With the single exception of Egypt, there is no foreign country in the Near and Middle East where British commercial interests are at the moment so well established and of such extensive scope as in Iraq. It is difficult to estimate accurately the amount of British capital invested in the oil industry alone. The capital of the Iraq Petroleum Company (£6,500,000) and its subsidiary, Mediterranean Pipe-Lines (Limited) (£9,178,000), is owned as to 23.75 per cent. by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, and as to a further 23.75 per cent. by the Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Company (Royal Dutch-Shell group), French and United States interests owning between them 47 per cent. of the balance. It is specified in the

company's convention that it shall remain a registered British company, and that its chairman shall at all times be a British subject. The majority of the company's technical employees are British and all other responsible positions in Iraq are filled by British subjects. The machinery and material necessary to its operations are predominantly of British manufacture. For the pipe-line construction alone approximately 200,000 tons of material have been imported into Iraq, and the possibility of laying one or more further pipe-lines, should the demand justify it, is already being envisaged.

The Khanaqin Oil Company and its subsidiary, the Rafidain Oil Company (the marketing concern for the sale of oil products in Iraq, formed in accordance with the terms of the first-named company's concession) form part of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company; the Khanaqin Oil Company at present extracts annually from its field at Naft Khaneh about 60,000 tons of fuel oil, 15,000 tons of kerosene, and 12,000 tons of petrol, all of which is consumed in Iraq. These quantities do not, however, represent a maximum. In both companies all responsible positions are filled by British subjects.

Mosul Oil-fields (Limited) are the operating company for the British Oil Development Company's concession in Northern Iraq. As originally constituted, this concern consisted of British, French, German and Italian interests, the nominal capital being £1 million. Early this year difficulty arose over payment of the second annual dead rental of £125,000 gold (£190,000 sterling) falling due, according to the company's concession, on the 1st January, 1934. The French group professed inability to subscribe further capital, and the financial situation in Germany precluded any contribution from the German interests. Eventually the amount due was paid in full, the British and Italian groups between them contributing the necessary funds. The result of this may well be that the French and German interests will be eliminated and the position of the British group considerably strengthened. The company's operations are still in the experimental stage, and drilling is proceeding at three points. Results hitherto obtained have not been unpromising, but it is too early as yet to pronounce on the prospects of success of the undertaking.

#### *Banking.*

There are in Iraq only three established banks—the Eastern Bank, the Imperial Bank of Persia, and the Ottoman Bank. The first two of these are entirely British, while the Ottoman Bank is an Anglo-French concern. The managers of all three are British subjects, as are all their higher-grade employees. The Eastern Bank has branches at Bagdad, Mosul, Basra, Kirkuk and Amara, the Ottoman Bank at Bagdad, Basra and Mosul, and the Imperial Bank of Persia at Bagdad and Basra.

#### *Shipping.*

The Mesopotamia-Persia Corporation (Limited), constituted after the war, practically control the river transport system on the Tigris, between Basra and Bagdad, and, in the flood season, as far as Mosul, in their capacity as agents of the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company. The latter are the actual owners of the vessels engaged in this traffic and obtain all their material from the United Kingdom. The corporation are agents for a number of British shipping companies and for the Lloyd Triestino.

Frank C. Strick and Co. (Basra) (Ltd.) are intimately associated with the shipowners Frank C. Strick and Co., of London, whose vessels provide a direct link between the United Kingdom and Basra, and for whom they act as agents. They are also agents for the Yamashita Shipping Company of Kobe, whose vessels have recently begun to call at Basra.

#### *Motor Transport.*

The Nairn Transport Company are the principal transporters by the trans-desert route between Bagdad and Damascus. The company is registered in Syria, with headquarters at Damascus, but they provide employment for a number of British subjects in Iraq.

Dwyer and Co., of Bagdad, are also engaged in the trans-desert transport business, and are likely to extend their activities considerably in that direction in the near future.



### Insurance.

The business of insurance in all its branches is in Iraq almost entirely in the hands of British firms representing British companies. The following is a list of British firms established in the country dealing with insurance of all descriptions:—

Lumsden and Greene.  
Fowler and Co.  
Mesopotamia-Persia Corporation.  
African and Eastern (Near East) (Limited).  
Dwyer and Co.  
Andrew Weir and Co.  
Frank C. Strick and Co.

### Air Transport.

The three air-transport companies now serving Iraq (Imperial Airways K.L.M. (Dutch) and Air Orient (French)) are all represented in Iraq, at Bagdad and Basra by British firms. Negotiations for the grant of a concession for internal air-services with extensions to Persia and to Cyprus, to be operated by an Anglo-Iraqi company, have been in progress for some time, and are still continuing.

### Agriculture.

Latifiyah Estates (Limited) is a British company developing an agricultural estate of an area of 60,000 acres some 25 miles south of Bagdad. It is to their credit that they have managed to carry on through a period of exceptional difficulty; and, by a system of small-holdings exploited by Iraqi tenant farmers with the advice and assistance of the resident British staff, they have done much to inculcate modern methods amongst native agriculturists.

The British Cotton-Growing Association has recently suspended its cotton-ginning operations in Iraq, but the association's plant has been taken over by their manager for his own account. The association's decision was taken in consequence of the severe decline of cotton production in Iraq, due to the poor prices available, but there appears to be no reason why a revival of interest in cotton should not take place in due course.

### Miscellaneous.

Imperial Chemical Industries (Levant) (Limited) is a subsidiary of the British company of the same name. They are importers of chemicals and chemical fertilisers and hold the agency for Humber and Hillman cars.

Messrs. Murdoch, a British firm established in Cairo, have recently obtained the contract for the supply of bricks for the new Royal Air Force base at Dhibban, and their activities are likely to be extended in other directions in Iraq.

The Bagdad Light and Power Company is a British registered company holding the concession for the supply of electric power to the city of Bagdad. The manager is a British subject.

Messrs. Whinney, Murray and Co. are the only firm of chartered accountants in Iraq. Their principal business is at Basra.

British firms are very largely interested in the general import and export business and have no serious foreign competitors. The principal firms so engaged are:—

Messrs. Mesopotamia-Persia Corporation, with branches at Bagdad, Basra, Mosul, and at several centres in Southern Iraq, as well as in Persia.  
African and Eastern (Near East) (Limited), who are the largest exporters of Basra dates.  
Frank C. Strick and Co.  
David Sassoon and Co. (building material).  
Birch, Marr and Co. (agricultural machinery).  
Andrew Weir and Co.  
Fowler and Co.

British participation in other branches of commercial activity covers a wide field. The *Times* Printing and Publishing Company owns the *Iraq Times*, the

only foreign newspaper published in the country, with the exception of a Turkish newspaper which appears spasmodically. They are also printers and publishers, as are Mackenzie and Mackenzie, who own the principal bookshop, with a large and up to date stock of English literature. The capital of the Iraq Racing Company, which has done much for the improvement of horse-breeding, is largely British, and its salaried officials are British subjects. And there are British subjects engaged in such varied occupations as the cinematograph business, auctioneering and the sale of motor accessories.

Turning to the question of foreign competition in Iraq, it may be said at once that there are no signs as yet of any threat from outside to British supremacy within the country. The foreign holdings in the oil companies can scarcely be considered as competing with British interests. In the field of transport foreign shipping and aircraft companies are content to avail themselves of the services of British firms as agents; and there is only one foreign (American) firm actively engaged in the date export trade. It would, however, be unwise to conclude that the position is therefore static in this respect, and that British interests can be maintained at their present level without effort and irrespective of changes in the currents of trade and the channels of communication.

In the sphere of Iraq's external communications by sea there have been patent signs of late of a growing challenge to British predominance from Italian and Japanese shipping interests. The Lloyd Triestino Company have recently inaugurated a two-monthly service of cargo steamers between Italian ports and Basra, and Japanese cargo vessels are now calling at that port at approximately the same interval of time. Either of these services may be expanded if the cargo available justifies an extension, and, indeed, in the case of the Japanese, this expansion is probably only awaiting a solution of the problem of return cargoes from Iraq to Japan, since the volume of Japanese exports to Iraq is increasing monthly.

Great Britain's principal competitors in the import trade of Iraq are Japan, Persia, Belgium and the United States of America, in that order. No other country takes as much as 4 per cent. of the total import trade. Of these, Persian imports, consisting mostly of carpets, do not compete with United Kingdom manufacturers; Belgium, competing in the supply of sugar, metals (mostly constructional), and woollens, has lost ground in all three classes of goods to the United Kingdom, though making a slight advance in her total import trade with Iraq; and the United States, the chief suppliers of motor vehicles, have improved their general position. In these cases the maintenance or improvement of the British position has been very largely due to the divorce of sterling from gold. The figures at present available do not reflect the effect of the abandonment of the gold standard by the United States, but there is little doubt that an increase of American imports will result therefrom.

Japan's share of the Iraq import trade has grown in the last four years from insignificant proportions to a percentage of 12, and Japan now occupies third place, after the United Kingdom and India, in the import trade of the country. Japanese competition is felt by all countries and in most classes of imported goods. Full details of this competition, as it affects the trade of the United Kingdom, have recently been furnished to the Foreign Office, and it is unnecessary to enter into details here. The United Kingdom manufactures chiefly affected are cotton textiles, where a fall of five points in the United Kingdom percentage of imports can safely be ascribed to increased Japanese competition. Unimportant as this loss may seem to be, it is sufficient on which to ground serious misgivings for the future, since Japan's interest in the Iraq market has been hitherto incidental rather than deliberate. Of late, however, there have been clear indications that she intends to devote closer attention to Iraq, as shown by the establishment of direct communications by sea between Japan and Basra, and by the steps taken to secure return cargoes from Iraq for the Japanese vessels operating the service.

May 12, 1934.

C. A. W. W.



*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received June 6.)*

(No. 288.)  
Sir,

*Bagdad, May 18, 1934.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 94 of the 3rd May, I have the honour to inform you that I carried out an extensive tour of the Assyrian settlements in Northern Iraq from the 21st to the 29th April.

2. I visited about twenty villages in all, some by car and some of the more inaccessible villages on horseback, and was accompanied by an interpreter who was thoroughly conversant with the Syriac language. I also saw representative gatherings of Assyrians, including the three bishops, Mar Yusuf, Mar Sergis and Mar Yoalaha, at half a dozen convenient centres. Nights were spent at Mosul, Dohuk, Amadiyah and Diana, and I was enabled, through the courtesy of the Iraqi authorities and the unusual clemency of the weather, to accomplish the two main objects of my tour. These were to listen patiently to what Assyrians of all shades of opinion had to say about the present position and to give them sound advice as regards the future.

3. In my many talks with the Assyrians I was at pains to observe an attitude of strict impartiality. I never referred to the Mar Shimun or to the factions into which the community was divided, or to the possibility of settlement in two separate batches. Nor did I mention Brazil as the country provisionally selected by the League of Nations for a new home.

The advice that I gave to all was to continue their normal occupations, either by working on the fields or plying their trades as before, until the time came for them to leave Iraq, if they decided to do so after hearing what the local committee had to offer. This committee, I told them, would tour the Assyrian villages when a new country had been definitely selected by the League for Assyrian resettlement. In the meantime, I urged them to be patient and law-abiding; to avoid panic and mass movements, which would invite pillage by their neighbours and give rise to misunderstandings with the Government; to bring freely to the notice of the local Iraqi authorities, or to the British Administrative Inspector (Major Wilson), or the Settlement Officer (Major Thomson), any reasonable requests to enable them to continue a normal life. Above all, to do their best to cultivate the goodwill of the Iraqi Government and the neighbouring tribes of Kurds, Arabs and Yezidis, which I explained to them was the only practical means of guaranteeing the future happiness and security of those who elected to remain in Iraq. I assured them that it was the definite policy of the Iraqi Government to afford them all reasonable protection and assistance, and that when the committee visited them every Assyrian who was an ex-Ottoman subject would be given a free choice whether to stay in the country or leave. They must understand, however, that such a large emigration scheme was inevitably complicated by political and financial considerations and would take a long time to complete. In the meanwhile, it was their plain duty to carry on and work as best they were able and at all costs to avoid pauperising themselves. I said that whatever new country accepted them would expect to receive workers and not loafers or temporary settlers; in other words, the Assyrians should make up their minds to abandon the rôle of refugees and settle down as permanent citizens of the State of their adoption.

4. Although the advice which I gave to the Assyrians was the same for all, the comments which they made to me on the present situation were widely different in the various districts which I visited. They were unanimous on two points, viz., their anxiety to be acquainted as soon as possible with the offer of the League in regard to a new home, and their unabated confidence in Great Britain to show them sympathy and support.

The Assyrians of the Shaikhan district professed undisguised apprehension as to their future security. They complained that nearly all their villages had been looted and partially destroyed in one week following the 11th August. They admitted, however, that the Iraqi Government had satisfactorily repaired those villages which they had agreed to reoccupy and had offered to provide them with the means for sowing their crops. On the other hand, very little had been paid to them in compensation, and they were so disgusted at the treatment that they had received from their neighbours and so apprehensive of the future that

they declined to do any work in the fields and were merely awaiting the signal to leave Iraq. In one village which I visited, however, I found that the headman, who was an ex-levy officer, had courageously followed Major Thomson's advice and had persuaded the villagers to accept the Iraqi Government's assistance and to till their fields as before. In this village there was no distress and a bumper crop was confidently expected. This solitary exception serves to emphasise the wrong-headedness and obstinacy of the inhabitants of the other villages in declining to move a finger to help themselves. They were frankly living on their savings and the charity of friends still serving in the levies, and, when these resources fail, they must either work or become destitute. It should be noted that the villages in this area were pillaged only after they had been evacuated, and that not a single Assyrian man, woman or child was killed or even wounded throughout the disturbances.

5. In the southern part of the Dohuk district, where the number of Assyrian casualties from the disturbances are now estimated at forty killed, the Assyrians took much the same line as their brothers in Shaikhan, though there was less apprehension to be observed and less reluctance to work in the villages which bordered on the Amadiyah district, while confidence was expressed in the kaimakam and the local police to afford them the necessary protection. Nevertheless, I formed the impression that practically the whole of the Assyrian population of the Shaikhan and Dohuk districts, numbering perhaps 12,000 souls, were eager to accept any reasonable offer of a home in another country.

6. In the Amadiyah district, where there was no destruction of life or property during the troubles in August, I found that the Assyrians had complete confidence in their Kurdish kaimakam, and a marked disinclination to leave their prosperous villages, provided that they could feel assured of security and fair treatment in the future. They had nothing to complain of in regard to past treatment by the Iraqi Government, but all, including the followers as well as the opponents of the Mar Shimun, were unanimous in condemning the exodus to Syria as a political move entirely unconnected with land settlement, which was engineered by the Patriarch for his own selfish ends. They vehemently accused those who took part in this exodus of being the cause of all the troubles which had befallen the Assyrian community in general, not so much for the exodus itself as for their senseless and criminal behaviour in returning to Iraq with their arms and making a treacherous attack on the Iraqi army. They emphasised that if these malcontents, many of whom had gone from their own villages, had remained in Syria all would have been well, and they made an interesting point about the Simel massacre that if the victims had been men who had returned from Syria to fight they would have condoned the slaughter. What had shaken the confidence of the whole Assyrian community was the tragic fact that the victims in nearly every case were the loyal supporters of the Government. This fact, they said, made it very difficult for them to decide what answer to return to the committee after the League's offer had been explained. On the one hand, they were loath to abandon villages which were close to their old homes and gave them everything they could reasonably want; on the other hand, they feared that a less competent and determined kaimakam might not be able to protect them from the depredations of the Kurds in the future.

7. In the Rowanduz district, which includes the Shemsdinan Assyrians of the Harir Plain and Diana, there was, similarly, no loss of life or property last August. It will be recollected that his late Majesty King Feisal and Nuri Pasha expressed their thanks to me on more than one occasion for the restraining influence exerted on the Assyrians by the British vice-consul at Diana, Mr. Chapman-Andrews, during the crisis. When I interviewed at Harir a representative gathering headed by the uncle of the Mar Shimun, Bishop Mar Yusuf, the exodus to Syria was strongly condemned as being the unnecessary cause of all their troubles, and the bishop requested me to press the Iraqi Government to allow Assyrians domiciled in Russia and Persia to enter Iraq. When I enquired the reason for this request, I was informed by the meeting that the conditions in Persia and Russia were becoming so intolerable that the Assyrians there would much prefer to live in Iraq, where in normal circumstances they could be assured of good treatment. I replied that I could not see my way to invite the Iraqi Government to receive more Assyrians from outside at a time when many Assyrians in the country were pressing the League to be sent to a new home. The bishop told me privately that, if cant and prejudice



were eliminated from the discussion of this question, and the Assyrians were allowed to live their own lives, without interference, under their tribal leaders, there was little doubt that Iraq offered them a convenient and sufficiently comfortable home. This fact was thoroughly appreciated by the less fortunate Assyrians, who were exposed to every form of oppression and misery under the Soviet and Persian Governments. The trouble was that some of the Assyrians in Iraq had been misled and had compromised the security and happiness of the remainder. When he asked for my advice, I told him that I did not wish to discuss the past, and that the prosperity of the Assyrians who elected to remain in Iraq must depend on the goodwill established between them and their neighbours and the Iraqi Government. Each individual would have to decide for himself, when the time came, whether he would stay or go.

8. I do not think it can be predicted with any certainty which way the Assyrians of Amadiyah and Rowanduz areas, numbering perhaps 8,000 souls, will decide. Their instinct is to stay, but their confidence in the fairness of the Iraqi Government, or, rather, the Government's ability to keep the army under control, has been shattered by the tragedy of Simel. They still seem to have a blind faith in the sympathy and ability of His Majesty's Government to protect them, and this faith, taken in conjunction with their fondness for their present homes, may well be the deciding factor when it comes to the point. Present indications point in two directions. Many have sold their cattle at ridiculously low prices in the hope apparently that emigration will be started at once. Others have renewed their leases with their Kurdish landlords. The contiguity of the Iraqi battalion lines to the village of Diana, which contains a number of armed Assyrians, is a potential source of danger, which I took the opportunity of impressing on His Majesty's vice-consul and the Kaïmakam of Rowanduz, with a view to their acting in co-operation to prevent a stampede should a panic again occur.

9. What impressed me most in my conversations with the Assyrians was the pathetic eagerness with which information about the new home was awaited by those who had downed tools and had given up all hope of settling permanently in Iraq; the wistfulness with which those who were obviously attached to their present homes enquired about future prospects in this country, and the unanimous condemnation of the policy of the Patriarch which had inspired the exodus to Syria. The conclusion I formed was that a large number of Assyrians will have to be moved from Iraq as soon as possible if further troubles are to be avoided, and that the remainder would be willing to serve the Iraqi Government loyally if they were assured of a fair deal. This brings me to the subject of guarantees.

10. I have noticed two lines of criticism in the European press, both of which seem to betray a lamentable ignorance of the essential facts of the Assyrian problem. The first is that His Majesty's Government were gravely to blame in proposing the termination of the mandate for Iraq before the Assyrian question had been finally settled. The answer to this criticism is that successive Governments in Great Britain, from 1927 onwards, had pledged themselves to propose the entry of Iraq into the League of Nations in 1932, while the Assyrian Patriarch had consistently refused, on behalf of himself and his immediate followers, to accept any settlement in Iraq which did not involve the continuance of a mandate. If His Majesty's Government had acted on the advice of these critics, they would have broken a solemn pledge and handed over the political destinies of Iraq to a self-seeking adventurer. The result would have been a repetition of the 1920 troubles, which cost the British Treasury more than £100 million. The refusal of the Patriarch to accept the League's decision and co-operate with the Iraqi Government was due to political and not to economic causes. It is important that this fact should be understood, as it vitally affects the whole question of Assyrian settlement.

11. The second criticism is that the guarantees for the protection of minorities which were given by Iraq to the League were inadequate, and that, in any case, paper guarantees are futile. The answer to this is that the guarantees, which included permission, unprecedented in a Moslem country, for religious, educational and medical missions to practise freely in Iraq, are based on the stiffest available model, and that the only alternative to paper guarantees is resident force; in other words, the location of sufficient foreign ground troops in the country to ensure the protection of minorities by force. This solution, and the proposal for a League commissioner to reside in Mosul, are equally fantastic

and impracticable. The fact must be faced that in this modern world, which has witnessed, especially in the East, the growth of national aspirations and the consolidation of the authority of central Governments, a minority must conform to the laws of the State, abandon all claims to exclusive privileges and exhibit goodwill towards its rulers if it is to maintain a happy and prosperous existence. It is my conviction that the Assyrian rank and file, if left to themselves, would have settled contentedly on the excellent lands that have been allotted to them by the Iraqi Government. They have been misled by their leaders into a blind pursuit of an impracticable political ideal, and it is mainly the innocent who have suffered, while the guilty, including the real villain of the piece, the Patriarch himself, who is believed to be battenning on the contributions intended for the relief of his victims, are posing as martyrs to credulous well-wishers in Europe and America. Finally, I would emphasise the necessity for making a start with the emigration of at least 2,000-3,000 souls before the Paraná season terminates in September.

12. I enclose a memorandum giving a brief outline of the recent troubles<sup>(1)</sup> based chiefly on reports received from Assyrians; also a copy of a curiously-worded letter<sup>(2)</sup> which I have received from the Iraq Tiari Association of America.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

[E 3737/1/93]

No. 157.

*United Kingdom Delegate to Foreign Office.—(Received June 6.)*

(No. 71.)

THE United Kingdom delegate to the League of Nations presents his compliments, and has the honour to transmit copies of a record of the twenty-eighth meeting of the Council Committee, on the 31st May, respecting the Assyrian question, of which a copy has been sent to His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad.

*United Kingdom Delegation,  
Geneva, June 4, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 157.

ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

*Record of the Twenty-eighth Meeting of the Council Committee, held on  
May 31, 1934, at 3-30 P.M.*

THE PRESIDENT said that he wished to give his personal impressions on the situation which had now arisen.

He first drew attention to the memorandum circulated by the Secretariat (C.Min.Ass.39), describing the approaches made to various Governments, and the replies received.

M. Arocha intervened to say that a negative reply from Mexico had just come in.

The President continued that, in addition to the telegram of the 25th May from the Spanish Ambassador, which had already been circulated, he had received a private letter from the Ambassador, dated the 17th May, which did not bring out any fresh facts, but which made it quite clear that there was no hope of the Brazilian scheme being put into effect. The letter said that the situation had become worse since Brigadier Browne's return, and that opinion expressed both in the press and in Parliament was almost unanimous against accepting the Assyrians. The president felt that, while the Brazilian Government's attitude was not definitely known, there was evidently much less hope than before



as regards the Brazilian scheme—in fact, there was practically no hope. The Secretariat's memorandum showed that all countries approached, except the Argentine and Canada, had returned an unfavourable reply. He thought it was fairly clear that no favourable reply could be expected from the Argentine, and the United Kingdom representative at an earlier stage had referred to the difficulties in Canada. He wondered, therefore, whether as the Council was now meeting, the committee ought not to take the opportunity of referring the whole question back to it. They could say that they had done their best to fulfil the task given to them by the Council; that, although the attitude of the Brazilian Government was not yet officially known, the position there was not hopeful; that the committee had no indication that any other Governments would return a favourable reply; that the situation of the Assyrians meanwhile gave rise to anxiety; and that the committee thought it necessary, therefore, to submit the whole problem to the Council for the latter to take a decision as to further action.

The president added that the position of the Assyrians was evidently getting worse every day, and the months ahead were the most dangerous in the year. The committee, therefore, could not take the heavy responsibility of delaying a report until September. It was possible, of course, to object that, so long as the Brazilian Government had not definitely declared their attitude, it was unnecessary to do anything. This was no doubt partly right, but he thought it was inadvisable to be too juridical and formal. The basis of the despatch of the Mission of Investigation to Brazil was a message from the Spanish Ambassador indicating that the Brazilian Government would accept the Assyrians under certain conditions. A message from the same source, indicating that settlement was now impracticable, seemed to him good enough.

*The Italian Representative* said that the main point was the urgency of the problem. It had always been realised that a quick solution was necessary. Now that the Brazilian scheme was obviously hopeless and the prospect of obtaining replies from other Governments was remote, to continue the process of obtaining formal replies from every Government, in order to say that every possibility had been exhausted, would only prolong the delay. He shared the president's view, therefore, and thought that as the Council was in session, it was the duty of the committee to place the problem once more before it. The responsibility of not doing so was one which the committee could not take.

*The Mexican Representative* could not see any prospect of a solution between the present time and September. The committee's last report to the Council would have created a somewhat optimistic view regarding the possibilities of the Brazilian scheme, and he thought it really urgent to let the Council know the position.

*The Danish Representative* said that he fully shared the president's anxiety about delaying a report, but he thought that the committee must make up its mind as to what could be expected from the Council if the question was referred to that body. It seemed to him that the Council would first ask certain questions. They would ask why the committee had not pursued negotiations with the countries which had been approached. In this connexion he asked whether the countries mentioned in the League Secretariat's memorandum were really all that had been approached by the committee. His impression was that more had been approached, and that other possibilities suggested by the Nansen Office had also been considered. In the second place, he expected that the Council would ask whether the committee could not make some definite proposal. It was not enough merely to tell the public through the Council that the committee had failed in its task. The only result would be to create depression among the Assyrians and in the League.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said he realised the necessity of reporting to the Council that the Brazilian scheme had broken down once this fact had been definitely established. He could not agree, however, that the committee would be justified in reporting in that sense to the Council at present. Since the Spanish Ambassador's telegram of the 25th May, certain more detailed information had been received from His Majesty's Ambassador in Rio. It appeared, in fact, that what had been passed by the Constituent Assembly was not a special measure, but a provision for insertion in the Constitution which

had been under elaboration for some time and which was expected to be completed in some ten days' time. It was not entirely clear what the effect of this provision would be or when it would come into force, but it was clear that it was not yet actually in force, and he did not think that the committee was yet in a position to assume that the Brazilian Government would now withdraw the offer made in January. In this connexion he referred to the president's statement that Brigadier Browne's mission had gone out to Brazil on the strength of a message from the Spanish Ambassador. That was not entirely correct. The Spanish Ambassador had reported a definite offer made to him by the Brazilian Government. Moreover, this offer had been confirmed, he thought, to other Governments. Certainly, it had been confirmed to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom by the Brazilian Ambassador in London under instructions from his Government. It was, therefore, perfectly definite. It was an offer from the Brazilian Government, and he thought that the committee could not assume that that offer was withdrawn or impracticable of fulfilment until the Brazilian Government said so. He thought, therefore, that the first step must be to get a definite statement from the Brazilian Government regarding their attitude. But even if that attitude were unfavourable, he could not agree that the committee had exhausted its task and that it was in a position to tell the Council that there was little prospect of finding a destination elsewhere. The committee had so far not made a serious effort to find a destination elsewhere. They had merely addressed an enquiry to certain Governments, and had meanwhile investigated a scheme which happened to be available in the archives of the Nansen Office. That scheme had been found suitable, and the committee had not therefore, followed up the search for alternatives. He felt strongly that, if the Brazilian scheme failed, it would be necessary for the committee to approach once more those Governments which had either not yet replied finally or had returned an equivocal reply, and also to consider whether any other Governments should be approached. For instance, no official request had yet been addressed to the Governments represented on the committee itself, though the various members had undertaken at an earlier stage to find out whether their Governments would be prepared to accept the Assyrians. He could not, of course, say whether it would be possible to find an alternative, but, at all events, the Governments concerned would probably view the matter in a different light once the Brazilian scheme was definitely out of the running. He did not think that the committee needed any fresh mandate from the Council to continue this further search, and, indeed, it need not necessarily await a definite reply from the Brazilian Government before beginning it.

Furthermore, the United Kingdom representative strongly supported the view which had been expressed by the Danish representative that, before referring the question to the Council, it was necessary to consider what action the Council could take. The question of the situation of the Assyrians in Iraq, if there was long delay, had been raised, and he thought this needed very careful consideration by the committee before anything was said to the Council. It was true that the terms of reference of the committee laid upon it no specific task in relation to this aspect of the question. The *rapporteur's* report of last October had merely expressed the hope that the Iraqi Government would keep the committee regularly informed of the position. That, of course, implied that the committee was to concern itself to some extent with the situation of the Assyrians, and it could not shirk this task. It had, of course, no power to take any special measures, but, at all events, the United Kingdom representative thought that, before any reference was made to the Council, the committee ought to see the Iraqi representative and ask him what measures the Iraqi Government proposed to take in view of the delay which must now be anticipated.

*The French Representative*, who had entered the meeting rather late, expressed himself, after the position had been explained to him, as being in favour of reporting to the Council that the committee had exhausted the possibilities and asking for fresh instructions.

*The President* said that he would answer the remarks made by the Danish representative first. If the committee did not report the position to the Council, and if anything were to happen in Iraq between now and September, the committee would be responsible. The Danish representative had intimated that, by referring the matter to the Council, the latter might be placed in a difficult



position and would ask certain questions of the committee. The president said that this prospect did not worry him. The Council was the proper organ to take the necessary decisions. It might ask the committee to continue its work and to press other Governments to accept the Assyrians. If so, he was perfectly prepared to continue the committee's task. If he recommended a report now, it was because the Council was sitting. Had that not been the case, his action might have been different, but it must be realised that this was not a mere question of whether this Government or that had returned a definite reply. In the present economic situation of the world, it was obviously a most difficult problem to settle so many people, and he did not think there was any prospect of any country accepting the Assyrians. He would be glad to take all responsibility for any course which offered a solution, but he had the conviction that it was going to be extremely difficult to find a solution. The more delay there was, the more danger to the Assyrians. He did not attach too much importance to the Mar Shimun's petitions, or to the press campaign which was being carried on, but the Assyrian situation was obviously delicate. He did not think it would be necessary to say definitely that there was no hope of settling the Assyrians, but at least the committee ought to say that they feared settlement in Brazil would be impossible, and that, while they had no reply from certain Governments, e.g., Canada, they had no reason to hope that these countries would be willing to accept the Assyrians. He admitted that this was all hypothetical, but he thought it necessary to give the Council a true picture of the situation.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that he did not think the alternative lay between an immediate report and a report to the Council in September. It would be open to the committee at any moment to report to the Council if it thought that the situation required it.

*The President* interjected that it would be difficult to expect the Council to meet for the Assyrian question alone.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that he thought that that would be for the Council to decide, and they would have to do so with due regard for the seriousness of the situation. In any case he thought that the committee ought to be guided chiefly not by considerations of its own responsibility, but by what was going to be in the best ultimate interests of the Assyrians. He felt himself that to rush matters at the moment was not going to be in the best interests of the Assyrians. The whole question obviously needed the most careful consideration before any action was taken.

*The Danish Representative* asked of what utility the Council could really be in protecting the Assyrians between now and September. The action of the Council would in any case depend to a large extent on the proposals which the six Governments represented on the committee could bring to the Council. If these six Governments, with their knowledge of the problem, failed to make any proposal, surely the prospect of a useful decision by the Council was small. When it was known that the Brazilian scheme had failed, the juridical point whether there was an official Brazilian reply to this effect or not might not matter very much; but while the committee need not take too juridical a view on that matter, let it beware of taking too juridical a point of view regarding the necessity of reference of the question at this stage to the Council. It was necessary to think out what the Council could do. If the Council were to meet to-morrow and receive a negative report, what would happen the day after in Iraq? The present proposal to refer the matter to the Council was a negative one. It contained no positive suggestion. He agreed that it was not so much the responsibility of the committee that was involved as the interests of the Assyrians.

*The President* agreed that it was inadvisable to take too juridical an attitude; at the same time the committee must not go beyond its mandate. It was not bound to make proposals to the Council. The Council might certainly ask the committee to take on a further task. If the Assyrians could not leave Iraq, the Council might ask what the committee proposed. They might ask the committee to consider the question of resettlement in Iraq, or they might set up some other body for that purpose. In any case, with or without a report to the Council at this stage, the news of the failure of the Brazilian scheme was bound to become public, and his desire was to report to the Council at once in order to clear up an

equivocal situation. He was quite ready to meet the United Kingdom representative to the extent of intimating that the prospects of settlement, though doubtful, were not yet exhausted, but he was opposed to letting the matter drag on without any report to the Council until September. Even a report, say in a fortnight's time when the Council had risen, would not be sufficient. He must adhere to his intention of reporting to the Council at its present session. He hoped that the committee would be able to agree unanimously on this course. So far the committee had proceeded by unanimity, and he did not wish to have to resort to a majority vote. He himself had unfortunately to leave the committee in order to attend another meeting. He suggested that the members of the committee should, in his absence, continue to discuss the matter in private, in the hope that the Danish representative, at all events, would be able to change his opinion.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that he thought there was much more to be done before a report could be presented to the Council. The latter would naturally be anxious about the situation in Iraq, and would want to know how the committee proposed to deal with this. It was impossible for the committee, at short notice and without giving the Iraqi Government any chance to consider the situation, to go to the Council and to report that the situation of the Assyrians was precarious. The committee certainly had no power to ask the Iraqi Government to adopt any particular measures, but at least they ought to consult with the Iraqi representative and allow him time to refer to his Government as to whether any particular measures for safeguarding the Assyrians were practicable.

*The Danish Representative* agreed that the position of the Government of Iraq in the event of an immediate report to the Council ought to be taken into consideration.

*The Italian Representative* suggested that the report should be merely an objective one describing what the situation was at the moment.

*The United Kingdom Representative* again urged that for this the committee ought to try to find out definitely what the attitude of the Brazilian Government was. It was quite possible to send a telegram immediately, and the reply should not be long delayed.

*The President* said that he might consider a telegram to the Brazilian Government, but in any case he must insist on a report to the Council at the present session.

*The Danish Representative* asked whether the Iraqi delegate was aware of the Spanish Ambassador's latest telegram.

*M. Arocha* replied in the negative. The Iraqi permanent delegate was on leave and M. Shabandar was at present in charge. He had merely informed M. Shabandar that the prospects of the Brazilian scheme were at present poor.

*The Danish Representative* said that this raised the whole question of the relation of the committee with Iraq. It was the duty of the committee, under its terms of reference, to keep in touch with the Iraqi representative about the situation of the Assyrians, and he thought the Iraqi representative must certainly be approached before a report was made to the Council.

*The President* said that this was not, of course, excluded.

The president then left the meeting and a private discussion followed between the remainder of the members. Discussion was somewhat confused and it is unnecessary to report it in detail. It was eventually agreed that it would be an advantage to clear up the Brazilian Government's attitude if possible before reporting to the Council, and that it would be necessary to consult the Iraqi representative.

*The United Kingdom Representative* made it clear that he would have no objection to reporting to the Council that the Brazilian scheme had failed once this was definitely established. In his view, the report ought to go on to say that the committee was naturally pursuing other alternatives, but that it had considered it necessary to report the situation to the Council in view of the delay



involved. Reference might also be made to the anxiety which the committee felt regarding the situation of the Assyrians during this delay, and the report might say that the committee—although not invested with any powers in this matter under its terms of reference—had nevertheless taken it up with the Iraqi Government and would report again to the Council if need arose.

It was agreed that a telegram to the Spanish Ambassador at Rio de Janeiro should be drafted for consideration at a meeting at 9 P.M.

J. C. STERNDAL BENNETT.

[E 3738/1/93]

No. 158.

*United Kingdom Delegate to Foreign Office.—(Received June 6.)*

(No. 72.)

THE United Kingdom delegate to the League of Nations presents his compliments, and has the honour to transmit copies of a record of the twenty-ninth meeting of the Council Committee, on the 31st May, 1934, respecting the Assyrian question, of which a copy has been sent to His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad.

*United Kingdom Delegation,  
Geneva, June 4, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 158.

#### ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

*Record of the Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the Council Committee, held on  
May 31, 1934, at 9 P.M.*

THE meeting had before it a draft telegram (Annex A) to the Spanish Ambassador at Rio de Janeiro, which had been prepared by the United Kingdom representative and M. Arocha.

*The President* said that he was ready to send this telegram, subject to two observations: Firstly, if, when the final moment arrived for putting the question on the agenda of the Council during its present session, no reply had come from the Spanish Ambassador, he reserved the right to raise the question again of referring the matter to the Council. Secondly, if a reply were received which was indefinite, he also maintained his wish to refer to the Council, unless, of course, the reply showed that real hope of carrying through the Brazilian scheme still existed, in spite of present expectations.

*The Italian, Mexican and French Representatives* agreed to the text with the same reservations.

*The Danish Representative* agreed to the text and to a fresh meeting to consider reference to the Council in the cases contemplated by the president.

*The President* then suggested that a draft of a report to the Council should be drawn up, and that it should be worded in such a way as to try to meet the difficulties of those members of the committee who did not at present agree to a report to the Council. He thought that it should be very concise, and should simply report to the Council that the Brazilian scheme had failed, and that, though the prospects of settlement elsewhere had not been exhausted, no suitable alternative was at present feasible.

*The Danish Representative* asked whether it was not proposed to put anything in the report about the situation of the Assyrians in Iraq.

*The President* replied that on this point he had not yet made up his mind.

*The Danish Representative* said that, if the situation of the Assyrians were to be mentioned, the committee ought to consider first, with the Iraqi representative, the situation created by the decision of the Brazilian Constituent Assembly.

Furthermore, there were points in the latest situation reports (C. Min. Ass. 36 and 38) submitted by the Iraqi Government which required comment. The state of health in the refugee camp at Mosul was alarming.

*The President* agreed that the situation would have to be discussed with the Iraqi representative before a report were made to the Council. If, however, the matter were to be discussed with him, the committee must prevent him from disclaiming responsibility and placing it upon the committee.

*The Danish Representative* said that it would, of course, no doubt be necessary for the Iraqi representative to refer to his Government before he could say anything definite.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that this would certainly be the case if the committee intended to make any specific suggestion to the Iraqi representative.

*The President* asked what suggestions the United Kingdom representative would propose.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that this would very largely depend on what the committee decided to do with the latest petitions from the Mar Shimun (C. Min. Ass. 37 and 40). An earlier petition of the 3rd May had been referred to the Iraqi Government for observations. Was it proposed to follow the same procedure with the new petitions, and was it proposed to make any reference to these petitions in reporting to the Council?

*The President* expressed the view that the committee ought to follow the ordinary minorities procedure. In reply to an observation by M. Arocha, that if the Council had removed the question from the ordinary minorities procedure, it might perhaps be supposed to have left liberty to the Assyrian Committee to deal with further petitions, he said that, naturally, the committee had a wide discretion, but the Iraqi Government, on their side, could not be expected to do anything which they would not be required to do under the ordinary minorities procedure. He thought that the best course for the committee to take was to act precisely as though it was a Committee of Three. It would be guided by the Minorities Section as to whether the petitions were receivable and what procedure should be adopted regarding them.

*M. Arocha* said that the usual course was for the secretariat to decide whether the petitions were receivable. In the affirmative case, they were referred to the Government concerned for observations, and usually were not circulated to the Council until the observations of the Government concerned had been received.

*The President* said that he was quite prepared to follow the same procedure in this case. He agreed that if a report were made to the Council it would be necessary to mention the Assyrian situation, and he would like to summon the Iraqi representative, and ask him what the Iraqi Government proposed to do if settlement in Brazil proved impossible.

*M. Arocha* suggested that the report should mention that the committee understood its task to be only to find land for settlement, and not to include any responsibility for the situation of the Assyrians in Iraq. Also, the committee might profit by the present occasion to try to send out some sort of independent observer to Iraq.

*The President* said that as regards the first point he did not think it was necessary for the committee to point out that it had no responsibility for the situation of the Assyrians, as that was implicit in its terms of reference. As regards measures to be taken for the security and well-being of the Assyrians pending settlement, the responsibility lay with the Iraqi Government, and it was undesirable to have that responsibility placed either on the committee or on the Council. If a neutral observer were sent to Iraq, that would be the beginning of entailing responsibility on the League. One could, of course, consider this



question from the juridical point of view, and also from the point of view of public opinion. Juridically, no responsibility lay with the committee. For the purpose of public opinion he wished to remove any impression that responsibility lay with it by laying the situation before the Council.

*The Mexican Representative* said that the committee was clearly not responsible for what might happen in Iraq, as it had no means of supervising the situation there. He suggested that the report should refer in quite general terms to the situation of the Assyrians. He thought, in particular, that it might allude to the unsatisfactory situation at present existing in the camp in the matter of health. The number of deaths which had recently taken place was much too high.

In the somewhat confused discussion which followed, mention was made of the possibility of the committee proceeding with the task of resettlement in Iraq if the prospects of settlement outside Iraq were unfavourable.

*The President* said that the problem of settlement in Iraq could only arise when the possibility of settlement outside had definitely been ruled out. The two tasks could not be pursued simultaneously, but so long as the question of settlement outside Iraq was under consideration, a certain responsibility would rest upon the committee if it did not draw the attention of the Council to the dangers involved in delay.

*M. Arocha* took the view that if the committee's work were suspended pending a definite reply from Brazil and in the meantime something happened in Iraq, the committee could hardly escape responsibility for having left the Assyrians to the mercy of the Iraqi Government, if they had taken no special steps to satisfy themselves that the situation of the Assyrians was satisfactory. The report to the Council might make it clear that neither the committee nor the Council had, in fact, any responsibility. At the same time, it might be a useful preventive measure to have some independent observer in Iraq to watch affairs.

*The President* said that he agreed as regards the report to the Council. The question of an independent observer, however, was an extremely difficult one, and would be best left until the question of resettlement in Iraq arose.

*The Danish Representative* said at the same time it would be extremely useful if the Iraqi Government could be induced to offer some form of independent investigation.

General agreement was expressed with this view.

*The President* then repeated that his idea was that the report to the Council should be purely objective and confined to facts. It should be left to the *rapporteur* to express any opinion. It might be that the *rapporteur* would wish to suggest that the Council should decide whether the committee should proceed further in its search for a destination, or whether the idea of settlement outside Iraq could now be abandoned. In the latter case, it might be necessary to contemplate immediate measures for settlement in Iraq and to appoint a special League Committee to consider this matter, or to give the present committee further powers. Alternatively, of course, the matter might be left entirely in the hands of the Iraqi Government. The drafting of the *rapporteur's* report would naturally be a matter of some difficulty, and would have to take into account the views of all concerned, but he thought it was best that the committee's report should be confined entirely to facts, and that the conclusions should be left to the *rapporteur*.

*The Danish and United Kingdom Representatives* expressed some doubt whether they could agree entirely with this procedure.

*The United Kingdom Representative*, in particular, urged again that the committee should not abandon the idea of settlement outside Iraq at the present stage, or encourage the Council to do so. Every effort must be made to find a new destination. The committee had no right to shirk this duty simply because it would take time. The real question which they had to face was whether they were honestly prepared to leave the Assyrians under present circumstances in Iraq without further effort.

Various possible destinations were then discussed. It was pointed out that the Mar Shimun had suggested Canada, Turkey and Syria.

*M. Arocha* said that he had ascertained from a Turkish colleague on the secretariat that there was definitely no chance of the Turkish Government agreeing. *M. Arocha* pointed out that the Mar Shimun had also suggested Syria.

*The French Representative* indicated that this was a very difficult question.

*The United Kingdom Representative* asked whether the possibility of settlement in the Lebanon had been considered by the French Government, and whether it was possible to hope for anything in that direction. He understood that the Lebanon was predominantly Christian, and naturally suggested itself therefore.

*The French Representative* feared that the Lebanon was quite impossible, mainly for economic reasons. In reply to a question, he said that it was not a matter of finding the necessary finance for settlement. It was rather a question of general economic and labour conditions in the Lebanon.

*The President* said that he was quite prepared unofficially to sound the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs as to whether settlement in Turkey was possible. He was also prepared to sound the Greek representative as to whether there was any hope in Crete, which had been tentatively suggested in general discussion. As regards the *rapporteur's* report, he hoped to get a unanimous report on the basis of facts as they were. He must, however, reserve his liberty as *rapporteur* regarding the contents of the report which he would have to furnish to the Council as *rapporteur*.

It was agreed that a meeting should be held with the Iraqi representative on the following day to ask questions about the latest situation report from the Iraqi Government. It was also agreed that the Iraqi representative should be informed of the position in Brazil.

Meanwhile, *the President* asked the United Kingdom representative, in spite of the fact that the latter was not at present in favour of a report to the Council, whether he would assist the committee by preparing the draft of a report which might be presented to the Council if the Brazilian attitude were cleared up.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that, in all the circumstances, he hardly felt able to accept this task, and on his proposal it was entrusted to *M. Arocha*.

J. C. STERNDAL BENNETT.

#### Annex A.

##### *Draft Telegram to Spanish Ambassador, Rio de Janeiro.*

Your telegram of 25th May. With a view to report to Council now sitting, committee desires to know definitely attitude of Brazilian Government. Committee would be grateful, therefore, if you would ascertain urgently whether January offer must be considered as impracticable of fulfilment and withdrawn.

[E 3739/1/93]

No. 159.

*United Kingdom Delegate to Foreign Office.—(Received June 6.)*  
(No. 73.)

THE United Kingdom delegate to the League of Nations presents his compliments, and has the honour to transmit copies of a record of the thirtieth meeting of the Council Committee on the 1st June, respecting the Assyrian question, of which a copy has been sent to His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad.

*United Kingdom Delegation,*  
*Geneva, June 4, 1934.*



Enclosure in No. 159.

## ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

*Record of the Thirtieth Meeting of the Council Committee held on June 1, 1934, at 3-30 P.M.*

THE members of the committee first met in private to decide on the line to take with the Iraqi representative, who had been asked to attend.

*The President* and the majority of the committee were at first opposed to speaking to the Iraqi representative at this stage about the responsibility of the Iraqi Government during the period of delay which must be anticipated if the Brazilian scheme definitely failed. They were inclined to leave this until after a report had been presented to the Council. The United Kingdom and Danish representatives, however, urged that it was necessary to take this question up before the committee reported to the Council, and that it might save time to speak to the Iraqi representative now on a hypothetical basis rather than call a further special meeting for the purpose before reporting to the Council. Eventually, it was decided to follow this course.

The question was also discussed of suggesting to the Iraqi representative for his Government's consideration that they should take the initiative in offering some form of independent investigation into the situation of the Assyrians in Iraq. It was decided that while some such suggestion might be opportune, it would be better for the president to make it privately rather than in a full meeting of the committee.

(M. Shabandar then joined the meeting.)

*The President* said that he had invited M. Shabandar in order to explain to him the present situation, and to ask certain questions arising out of the recent reports of the Iraqi Government. M. Shabandar would be aware of the agitation which had for some time past been carried on in Brazil against the Assyrian emigration scheme. The committee had recently received reports which showed that the situation in Brazil was now worse. A law had been voted which affected the problem, in the sense of making emigration more difficult. The attitude of the Brazilian Government towards the Assyrian scheme in the light of these developments was not yet known, and the committee had taken steps to clear up the position. Meanwhile, they wished to tell M. Shabandar that the prospects of the Brazilian scheme were unfortunately bad. As regards other countries, the prospects were not at present very favourable either. Various alternatives remained to be considered, and it was too early to say that they would not offer a solution, but at present no concrete solution was visible. The committee therefore feared that there might be a longer delay than had hitherto been anticipated, or what would be worse, it might even be found impossible to put any scheme of settlement outside Iraq into effect, in which case it would be necessary to contemplate the continued residence of the Assyrians in Iraq. The committee thought that the Iraqi Government would wish to prevent either of these eventualities from having unfortunate repercussions by taking special measures for the security and welfare of the Assyrians. The committee would like to know what measures the Iraqi Government would take. M. Shabandar was probably not in a position to reply at present, but he would, no doubt, wish to refer the matter to his Government.

M. Shabandar said that he was not in a position to give a definite reply, though he could indicate certain probabilities. The Iraqi Government had long known the difficulties in Brazil, and he knew that if a long delay were to be anticipated before the Assyrians could be settled outside Iraq, the Iraqi Government might find it difficult to maintain the refugee camp at Mosul. Provision for that camp had only been made up to September next, and he believed the Iraqi Government had under consideration the idea of distributing the refugees among various villages under the care of the headman of the village and with some financial provision for their maintenance by the headman.

*The President* said that M. Shabandar would no doubt wish to consult his Government before going into further details.

As regards the present situation of the Assyrians in Iraq, M. Oliván recalled that at a recent meeting with the Iraqi permanent delegate, the committee had referred to an apparent contradiction in previous Iraqi Government reports regarding the reconstruction of villages destroyed in the events of last summer. Was M. Shabandar yet in a position to reply on this point?

M. Shabandar replied that the point had been referred the Iraqi Government immediately after the last meeting which Taufiq Beg had attended. So far, no reply had been received, and he thought that the Iraqi Government must be waiting for Major Thomson to deal with the matter on his return. Major Thomson was furnishing a number of reports, and no doubt the question of the villages would appear among them.

*The President* then turned to the Iraqi Government's report of the 16th May—C. Min. Ass. 36. The committee had noted that Major Wilson reported a heavy mortality, namely, thirty deaths in 112 days, or an average of one in four days. A further report by Major Thomson—C. Min. Ass. 38—was rather more grave, and recorded a death-rate of one a day. The committee was rather alarmed by these figures.

M. Shabandar thought that there was a general epidemic in the region, not confined to the Mosul camp.

*The President* said that this might be the case, but the committee was rather puzzled by a statement in Major Wilson's report to the effect that "the general health of the camp is excellent." This did not appear to square with the high death-rate.

*The Iraqi Representative* said that he would gladly refer the points raised to his Government for further observations.

*The President* then referred to the recent petitions by the Mar Shimun, which had been forwarded to the Iraqi delegation for the observations of the Iraqi Government.

M. Shabandar made no comment on these petitions, but said that they had been referred to the Iraqi Government.

(M. Shabandar then withdrew.)

*The President* said that he would like to take the opportunity in the few minutes that remained of sketching the general lines of what he contemplated saying in the *rapporteur's* report which it would be his duty to present to the Council when the committee reported to the Council. The *rapporteur's* report was, of course, his own responsibility, and must express his own views, but he would like to discuss it informally with the committee so that, if possible, it might be of a nature which all the members of the committee could accept.

He proposed, first of all, to summarise the facts as they would be stated in the committee's report and to draw the conclusion that the prospects did not seem good. He would then go on to say that in these circumstances, so long as the committee's deliberations were continuing, the life of the Assyrian population was, so to speak, suspended, and its normal activities inevitably interfered with; and the Council must, from the point of view of the *rapporteur*, approach the question as one of urgency. Unless the Council thought that the task of the committee was finished, he would suggest instructions to the committee to make every effort to arrive at a quick solution on the settlement problem by examining as speedily as possible what prospects offered themselves. He did not propose to set a time limit to this task, but he would suggest that if, after a reasonable time (he thought himself about the beginning of September), the committee arrived at the conclusion that there was no suitable prospect of settling the Assyrians outside Iraq, they should—without waiting to refer to the Council, but in time to present a report to the Council at its September meeting—examine with the Iraqi Government what conditions the latter would envisage for the resettlement of the Assyrians in Iraq, in accordance with the Council's resolution of December 1932.

M. Oliván said that he was considering a report on these lines in the hope of providing a compromise between the two views which had been expressed on



the committee. The committee would still be free to exhaust the possibilities elsewhere than in Brazil, and, of course, if any good prospect offered itself, they would naturally pursue it in preference to entering into the question of resettlement in Iraq; but he wished to avoid the necessity of the committee waiting to consider resettlement in Iraq until the September meeting of the Council, if before then they came to the conclusion that this was the only course to take.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that he would like time to consider this suggestion, which he realised was put forward in the hope of compromise. At first sight his only comment would be to ask the committee to consider the possible effect on the Assyrians of referring at this stage to resettlement in Iraq. It was desirable not to do anything which would encourage those Assyrians who felt they could not stay in Iraq to take the law into their own hands and stage another exodus. Furthermore, it must be borne in mind that the Council's resolution of December 1932 was apparently not acceptable to, at all events, a section of the Assyrians. It had been their opposition to the execution of that resolution which had led directly to the troubles of last summer.

*The President* objected that this difficulty was bound to arise sooner or later if settlement outside Iraq were impossible. The committee could not delay indefinitely because of that.

*The United Kingdom Representative* emphasised that he was not opposing M. Oliván's suggestion at the present time. He would like to reflect on it. His only object for the time being was to put forward at once certain considerations which the committee ought to bear in mind.

*The President* said that the question of a report to the Council did not now appear to be quite so urgent, as he had ascertained from the President of the Council and the Secretary-General of the League that the Council would certainly last until Wednesday next, the 6th June, and might even go on longer. He thought, therefore, that it would be sufficient if the committee met again on Monday, the 4th June. This would give time for a reply from the Spanish Ambassador in Rio, and would also give time for M. Arocha to complete a draft report.

J. C. STERNDAL BENNETT.

[E 3749/1/93]

No. 160.

*United Kingdom Delegate to Foreign Office.—(Received June 7.)*

(No. 76.)

THE United Kingdom delegate to the League of Nations presents his compliments, and has the honour to transmit copies of a record of the thirty-first meeting of the Council Committee on the 5th June respecting the Assyrian question, of which a copy has been sent to His Majesty's Ambassador, Bagdad.

*United Kingdom Delegation,  
Geneva, June 6, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 160.

ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

*Record of Thirty-first Meeting of the Council Committee held on June 5, 1934,  
at 3-30 P.M.*

THE meeting had before it a draft report to the Council prepared by the Secretariat.

*The President* said that before considering this draft he wished to inform the committee of conversations which he had had with the Iraqi representative and the Persian delegate. He had seen the Iraqi representative on the 3rd June and had suggested unofficially the advisability of allowing an opportunity for some neutral observer to see what was the situation of the Assyrians in Iraq.

M. Shabandar could not, of course, commit himself, but appeared to understand the advantage of this suggestion and to be personally in favour of it. M. Shabandar had then asked M. Oliván for his opinion as regards the prospects of settling the Assyrians outside Iraq. M. Oliván had told him frankly that in his personal opinion the prospects were very poor. He made it clear, however, that, whereas he had first of all been speaking as the interpreter of the committee, he was on this latter point expressing his purely personal views, which were not necessarily those of the committee as a whole.

*The President* said that he had also spoken to the Persian delegate about the prospects of the Assyrians being settled in Persia. The Persian delegate had been most emphatic. He had said that not only was he authorised to say that his Government were not ready to admit the Assyrians, but it was their desire that the Assyrians should be settled outside Iraq as far away as possible from Persia.

*The President* added that he would as opportunity offered speak to the representatives of Turkey and Greece.

The meeting then considered the draft report to the Council. On the suggestion of the *Danish Representative*, the paragraph which referred to divergent tendencies in the committee was redrafted so as to show that two courses of action had been discussed in the committee but without implying that there was a conflict in the committee between two opposing parties. With this and certain minor textual amendments, the report was adopted.

*The President* then said that he wished to discuss informally with the committee the draft of the report which as *rapporteur* he would have to present to the Council and the draft resolution which that report would propose. It was agreed to strengthen that section of the draft resolution which referred to an appeal to Governments to consider favourably further approaches which might be made to them by the Assyrian Committee. The members of the committee indicated that, with this modification, they were in complete agreement with the draft report and the draft resolution.

*The French Representative* asked leave, before the meeting rose, to draw attention to a difficulty regarding the transfer from Iraq to Syria of the families of those Assyrians who had fled to Syria last summer. The French High Commissioner had authority to settle this matter with the Iraqi Government, but M. de Martel desired the co-operation of the local Nansen representative, M. Burnier, who, however, was not *au courant* with the question. The French representative recalled that the French Government, in their letter of the 9th January to the committee (C. Min. Ass. 18), had laid down certain conditions under which they were prepared to accept the families in question. These conditions had been formulated at the instance of the High Commissioner, who thought it necessary to have a mandate from the League of Nations in the matter in order to enable him to meet nationalist opposition in Syria. The High Commissioner also required the good offices of the Nansen Office to supervise the emigration and to make sure that Assyrians in Iraq, who had, in fact, no relatives in Syria, did not take the opportunity of slipping into Syria. The High Commissioner also wished the Nansen representative to be responsible for keeping the accounts relating to the maintenance of the families in question. The French representative, therefore, wished to request the committee to take the necessary action with the Nansen Office in Geneva to ensure that M. Burnier should be informed of the question and instructed to put himself in touch with M. de Martel, to assist in its solution.

*The President* proposed that at the next meeting of the committee M. Werner of the Nansen Office should be invited to attend. His presence would, in any case, be useful as the committee would have to discuss what countries were to be asked to reconsider the question of receiving the Assyrians, assuming that the Council adopted the resolution now proposed.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that he would like to draw attention to one point. In the Mar Shimun's petition of the 30th May (C. Min. Ass. 40), it had been alleged that a further massacre had been attempted at Diana on the night of the 29th-30th April last and that it had been prevented only by the intervention of the British vice-consul. The Foreign Office had at



once sent a telegram to His Majesty's Embassy at Bagdad to ascertain the facts and had now received the following reply:—

"Your telegram of 31st May.

"Facts are as follows:—

"On date mentioned Iraqi authorities wished to round up and arrest about twelve Assyrians from Persia, who had secreted themselves in Diana; police sergeant request the aid of the military, who searched and probably occupied some old trenches around the village. Six Assyrians were caught and are serving sentence of one month's imprisonment, pending return to Persia. Action of police and military, naturally, alarmed the villagers, and gave rise to charge and counter-charge that both sides were digging trenches with a view to hostilities. No undue violence was used, the vice-consul did not intervene and life returned to normal. Police sergeant has been punished for his panicky conduct."

*The President* observed that the Mar Shimun evidently gave a very free interpretation to the word "massacre."

J. C. STERNDAL BENNETT.

[E 3838/3838/93]

No. 161.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received June 11.)*

(No. 302.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, May 30, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the Iraqi Ministry of Finance have addressed to the Mesopotamia Persia Corporation (Limited) (presumably as agents of the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company) a request for a copy of the permit granted by the Ottoman Government allowing the latter company the right to operate a steamship service on the River Tigris.

2. The corporation have referred the request to their principals in London, and have informed the Ministry of Finance in this sense.

3. I have the honour to enclose a memorandum dealing with the history of British navigation rights on the Tigris and the Euphrates compiled from such records as are available at this Embassy. From this memorandum it will be seen that no permit appears ever to have been held by the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company or by their predecessors, Messrs. Lynch and Co.

4. There can be no doubt that the request of the Ministry of Finance has its origin in questions recently raised in Parliament and by the press concerning the participation of British companies in the river transport system of Iraq. This agitation was instigated by one Abdul Jabbar Khedery, an Iraqi competitor of the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company, who was perturbed by a proposal of the customs authorities which, if carried into effect, might have deprived him of part of his share of the river traffic. Hitherto the Customs Administration have permitted off-loading at Basra and the transfer from ocean steamers direct to river steamers, for dutying at Bagdad, of cargo on through manifests to Bagdad; and also cargo on transshipment manifests for Bagdad for which ocean bills of lading were issued to Basra only. "Through" manifests were issued in respect of the steamers of the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company only, and Abdul Jabbar's share of the traffic consisted of the cargo manifested to Basra for transshipment to Bagdad.

5. Recently the Customs Administration gave consideration to ways and means of reducing the abnormal congestion existing on the customs wharves at Bagdad, and envisaged, amongst other remedies, the withdrawal of the facilities hitherto accorded to merchants for the dutying at Bagdad of cargo shipped to Basra on transshipment manifests. This would have entailed the discharge of such cargo at Basra, with consequent higher handling charges, and would seriously have affected the interests of Abdul Jabbar, while leaving those of the British company relatively untouched.

6. The British companies are averse from antagonising Iraqi concerns, and I understand that Messrs. Strick, Scott and Co. and the Hansa Line, the

principal ocean shippers concerned, have now agreed to the issue of through bills of lading to Bagdad by Abdul Jabbar's steamers equally with those of the British company in respect of river transport. Thus the disadvantages under which Abdul Jabbar has hitherto worked, and of which he feared an aggravation, have been removed, and a further manifestation of nationalist feelings in this connexion is probably unlikely. During the past few weeks there have been suggestions put forward designed to induce the Iraqi Government to give some financial assistance to Abdul Jabbar. As, however, he now stands to lose nothing, it is possible that the last has been heard of this proposal.

7. I am sending a copy of this despatch and its enclosure to the Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &c.

G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

Enclosure in No. 161.

*Right of the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company to Operate a Service of Steamers on the Tigris.*

THE history of British navigation rights on the Tigris and Euphrates, and of the disputes with the Ottoman Government incidental thereto, goes back well over 100 years.

The earliest reference to these rights is contained in a treaty of 1661 between Great Britain and Turkey, containing the following clauses:—

"IV. All English ships or vessels, small or great, shall and may at any any time safely and securely come and harbour in any of the ports and seas of our dominions, and likewise may thence depart at their leisure, without detention or hindrance of any man."

"XXII. The English nation and all those that come under the banner of their vessels, small and great, shall and may navigate, traffic, buy, sell and abide in all parts of our dominions . . . and their ships and vessels may come safely and securely to anchor at all times, and traffic at all times in every part of our dominions."

In 1798 a British agent of the East India Company was permanently located at Bagdad, and there must have been considerable traffic between Basra and Bagdad to necessitate the establishment of such an agency. The river traffic was, it appears, carried on by means of country boats owned or hired by the East India Company and by British merchant vessels flying the British flag.

In 1834 the Sublime Porte issued a firman, at the instance of His Majesty's Government, granting premission to "the British Government" to navigate by turn two steamboats on the River Euphrates "for the purposes of facilitating commerce." This firman subsequently gave rise to a long series of misunderstandings, generally deliberate on the part of the Ottoman Government, which caused the right of British vessels to navigate the Tigris and Euphrates to be continually called in question. In actual fact, the two steamers to which the firman referred were not engaged in commerce, but were carrying out survey work on the Euphrates on behalf of His Majesty's Government; and the rights conferred by treaty and acquired by usage were not affected in any way by the terms of the firman.

In 1841 a second firman was obtained. This recited the terms of the previous firman and guaranteed the protection of the commandant of the two steamers when in the execution of his duties. (The original of this firman is believed to be at the British Embassy in Constantinople.) The fact that the name of the commandant was Lynch subsequently gave rise to much confusion, and enabled the Turkish authorities to argue that the navigation rights of the Euphrates and Tigris Company (Lynch and Co.) derived from this firman, and were consequently confined to the Euphrates.

In 1845 a dispute arose between the Turkish authorities at Bagdad and the British representative as to the liability to taxation, other than the usual import



and export dues, of British vessels navigating the Tigris. The Vali of Bagdad questioned, incidentally, the right of British vessels to navigate the Tigris at all except under special firman. The matter was taken up at Constantinople, and in April 1846 the British Ambassador obtained a Vizirial letter addressed to the Pasha of Bagdad, which dealt chiefly with the question of taxation, but which recognised implicitly the navigation rights of British vessels on the interior waters of the country. The terms of this letter were confirmed by further Vizirial letters of 1861 and 1862.

It was in 1864 that the Ottoman Government first based their objection to British commercial navigation of the rivers on the terms of the two firmans of 1834 and 1841, which in reality applied only to British Government vessels. For some reason this contention was allowed to pass unquestioned, and it was not until 1883 that anyone thought it worth while to traverse it. The same ill-founded argument was adduced time after time whenever the question of replacing a vessel of the Euphrates and Tigris Company arose.

In 1875 controversy arose over the right of the Euphrates and Tigris Company to tow barges on the Tigris. The Ottoman Government again relied on the wording of the inapplicable firmans of 1834 and 1841. The then Political Agent was instructed to report on the whole question, and the following main conclusions were reached by him:—

- (1) That the British Government has under the firmans of 1834 and 1841, which have been confirmed by the Vizirial letters of January 1861 and July 1862, the right, subject to certain special conditions, to navigate the River Euphrates with two steamers, "for the purposes of trade."
- (2) That under the arrangements of 1846, also confirmed in the Vizirial letters of 1861 and 1862, British merchants are at liberty to navigate the Tigris and the Euphrates under the British flag and without any restriction as to the number or description of the vessels employed, subject to the payment of the stipulated dues.
- (3) That the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company, represented by Lynch and Co., have no firman granting them an exclusive privilege to navigate the Tigris with two, and only two, steamers. Their rights really depend on the arrangement of 1846, and so far are neither greater nor less than those that may be claimed by any British merchant.

The Political Agent also quoted, in support of his conclusion numbered (2) above, article 8 of the treaty of 1861, which permitted the import and export of merchandise in British vessels equally with Ottoman vessels, whatever the place of origin or destination of the goods concerned.

In 1883 trouble again arose over the request of Lynch and Co. to be allowed to replace an old steamer by a new one. The Ottoman authorities again relied on the firmans of 1834 and 1841, asserting on this occasion that British vessels were entitled to navigate the *Euphrates* only, and going so far as to prevent the sailing of Lynch's boats. Pressure was brought to bear on the Sublime Porte by the Ambassador at Constantinople, and eventually all restrictions on navigation were removed, the Ottoman Government yielding apparently to the clearly expressed view of His Majesty's Government that the firmans of 1834 and 1841 had nothing whatever to do with the rights of navigation of British merchant vessels, which derived from usage, from the Vizirial letters of 1846, 1861 and 1862, and from treaty stipulations; but they refrained from admitting as much definitely and in writing, and the survival of the old argument is apparent in the terms of an agreement concluded just before the outbreak of the Great War.

In 1913 Lord Inchcape negotiated a concession with Hakki Pasha, the authorised representative of the Ottoman Government, for the exclusive right of navigation of the Tigris and Euphrates and of all navigable waters connected therewith. The concessionnaire was to form an Ottoman company within a specified time. An appendix to the concession provided that it should not come into force until after ratification by the British and Ottoman Governments of a declaration on the same subject signed by Sir Edward Grey and Hakki Pasha in London on the 29th July, 1913. This declaration was never ratified, and consequently the concession never entered into force. In article 4 of the concession it is stipulated that nothing in the concession shall in any way impair

the liberties then enjoyed by Messrs. Lynch or their nominees with respect to navigation on the Rivers Tigris and Euphrates, these liberties being quoted in a schedule attached to the concession, reading:—

"(A) Two steamers flying the British flag shall continue to navigate the Rivers Tigris and Euphrates, and to participate in the general right of navigation on the Shatt-el-Arab.

"(B) One steamer flying the British flag shall be held in reserve to replace either of the aforesaid steamers during disablement.

"(C) The two steamers actually plying shall be at liberty as heretofore to tow two barges each.

"(D) One steamer placed under the direction of Messrs. Lynch or their nominees, but flying the Turkish flag when outside the port, shall be at liberty to navigate concurrently with the two steamers specified above, and likewise to tow barges."

These provisos are reproduced in the declaration signed by Sir Edward Grey and Hakki Pasha. It is curious that the Foreign Secretary should have consented to admit in this way, by implication, the Turkish point of view, hitherto held to be completely erroneous, that the number of vessels maintained in the Mesopotamian rivers was subject to limitation. No doubt it was felt that the grant of the concession justified an admission of the truth of what was manifestly false, but of the falsity of which it would have taken several years to convince the Turkish Government.

After the war no question of the navigation rights of foreign vessels on the Mesopotamian rivers arose, although no definite declaration appears to have been made throwing them open to international traffic. Lord Inchcape raised the question of the validity of his concession, consequent upon rumours of restrictive measures by the Iraqi Government in 1924, and was informed that, for the reason given above, it could not be considered as being, or ever having been, in force; but that His Majesty's Government would have no objection to his applying to the Iraqi Government for a new concession on the lines of that of 1913. He did not, however, take any action in the matter.

The Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company at present operate, at certain seasons of the year, as many as thirteen steamers on the River Tigris. It would therefore be unwise for them, as successors of Lynch and Co., to rely on the admission in the schedule to the concession above mentioned that Lynch and Co. had long enjoyed the right to employ two steamers on the Tigris, even if that argument were held to have any force, which is at least doubtful. They could plead usage, and the terms of the Vizirial letters of 1846, 1861 and 1862, but it was held at the time that such Vizirial letters were not binding for any indefinite period of time and could be revoked at will; and the Iraqi Government, as successors of the Ottoman Government, could therefore presumably take such action, and usage alone would not operate to prevent the Iraqi Government enacting a cabotage law, in the absence of any contrary undertaking by the Iraqi State. One is therefore forced to the conclusion that the only useful course of action open to the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company, to safeguard their interests in the event of the enactment of some nationalistic measure by the Iraqi Government, would be to constitute themselves an Iraqi company. It is improbable that they will be willing to do this except as a last resource, but it might be well for them to bear in mind that the growth of nationalism in Iraq may later make the constitution of an Iraqi company with British shareholders a more difficult matter than it is at present.

Bagdad, May 23, 1934.

C. A. W. W.



*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received June 11.)*

(No. 303.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, May 30, 1934.*

WITH reference to Sir Francis Humphrys's despatch No. 246 of the 3rd May, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a translation of a letter which he received shortly before his departure from the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs, on the subject of relations between Iraq and Persia and the present position on their common frontier.

2. The enclosures to Dr. Damluji's letter provide a useful summary of the grievances of the Iraqi Government against the Persian authorities, and show clearly how the alleged activities of the Anromani Kurds on Iraqi soil, which formed the subject of Sir Francis Humphrys's despatch No. 264 of the 10th May, are but one of the many questions which are at present in open dispute between the two countries. But the acrimonious tone which was developing in the diplomatic exchanges between the Iraqi and Persian Governments has recently shown signs of abating, and at an interview between the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Persian Minister on the 14th May, which was arranged at the latter's special request, Samii Khan adopted a much more conciliatory attitude, and asked to be enlightened on the Iraqi counter-charges against the Persian Government. In particular, he requested details of the accusation that the Persian frontier authorities were conniving at the armed incursions of Persian tribesmen into Iraq. He also expressed concern at the attacks levelled at Persia in the Chamber of Deputies on account of the cutting of the Mandali water supply and the construction of Persian police posts in Iraqi territory, and suggested that they were calculated to rouse public opinion in Iraq.

3. This afforded Dr. Damluji an opportunity to state the Iraqi complaints against Persia in these matters (his Excellency did not touch upon the Shatt-el-Arab on this occasion), and to reaffirm the adherence of the Iraqi Government to the frontier laid down by the Demarcation Protocol of 1914. The Persian Minister expressed himself as grateful for these explanations, and alluded to his personal exertions to remove the causes of friction between the two countries. He stated that the Persian Government were ready to use all means to prevent armed raids by their tribes into Iraq, and added that he would personally draw their attention to the Iraqi complaint that the Persian authorities refused to grant the extradition of refugees who had committed crimes in Iraq. Samii Khan assured Dr. Damluji that the Persian Government had no intention whatsoever of violating Iraqi territory, and that if proof of such violation were given they would be prepared to remove the cause of offence, as they had already done in 1931 in the case of a police post near Khanikin. At the same time Persia could not recognise the Frontier Demarcation Protocol. As regards the Mandali water supply, his Excellency blandly affirmed that the water had never been cut off and that there was no intention of so doing.

4. I understand that, while the Iraqi Ministry for Foreign Affairs are not inclined to attach much importance to this conversation, they consider that the moderation of the Persian Minister's language and his readiness to discuss Iraqi grievances form a good beginning for further conversations which may lead to a solution of some of the outstanding questions. They are nevertheless apprehensive, in view of the reports which reach them of the increase of military and police posts on the Persian side of the frontier in the Suleimanieh area. Moreover, two days ago, there was a raid by some forty-five Kurdish brigands on an Iraqi post north of Penjvin, in which the attackers sallied forth over the border, killed four Iraqi policemen, and then returned to Persia, I understand, unscathed. It is firmly believed by the Iraqi authorities that this raid had the connivance of the Persian frontier officials.

5. A member of my staff recently asked the British Adviser in the Iraqi Ministry for Foreign Affairs for his opinion on the present Persian diplomatic offensive against Iraq. Mr. Edmonds replied that he did not regard the Persian "bombardment" very seriously. He maintained that the bubble of Persian bombast could easily be pricked by any Iraqi negotiator who resisted the temptation to follow the Persian lead into a bog of vague generalisations. The Persians could always be silenced by a challenge to substantiate, geographically,

their stories of raids and rebellions directed from Iraqi territory by pointing out the exact location of Persian posts in indisputably Iraqi territory, and by indicating the precise manner in which the water supply of the Iraqi frontier towns and villages was being diverted out of pure spite. Unfortunately, however, there exist few Iraqi officials who could marshal their facts, and who understand the superiority in an argument of a concrete fact over an abstract generalisation. Mr. Edmonds added, however, that the Persian efforts to seduce the Iraqi frontier tribes from their allegiance was a serious aspect of the situation. It appears that the Persian policy (compare the Persian Minister's note of the 30th April, which forms the last enclosure to Dr. Damluji's letter of the 10th May) is to bring the most extravagant accusations against tribal leaders on the Iraqi side of the frontier, and to goad the Iraqi Government, by menaces, into arresting and otherwise molesting numbers of their own subjects who have committed no crime in Iraq. These persons do not realise that the Persian Government is at the bottom of their misfortunes, and when they are released or escape from an Iraqi prison they are thoroughly disaffected against the Iraqi Government. The Persian frontier authorities then cause them to be informed that they will be welcomed on Persian soil, granted a full amnesty, if necessary, for their misdeeds on Persian soil, and given material assistance to found a new home. Mr. Edmonds believes that this policy has met with some success, and that at the present time a part of the population on the Iraqi side of the frontier are disaffected against the Government and look upon Persia as their friend.

6. The visit of the Iraqi Director-General of Police to the north-eastern part of the Iraqi frontier (reported in paragraph 3 of my despatch No. 264 of the 10th May on the Anroman situation) resulted in a recommendation that fourteen new police posts should be immediately established on the frontier in the sector between a point north of the town of Suleimanieh and a point east of Halabja. This plan is doubtless the one for a better frontier patrol to which Dr. Damluji refers in the fourth paragraph of his letter of the 10th May.

7. His Majesty's Ambassador recently suggested to King Ghazi and the Minister for Foreign Affairs that Nuri Pasha should be sent to Tehran on a special mission to try to clear up the various disputes and misunderstandings between the two countries. I understand, however, that the Shah has intimated that he would not be prepared to receive him.

8. The recent Persian campaign against Iraq is being followed intently among classes of the Iraqi population who normally leave the discussion of foreign politics to the small effendi class in the big towns. The wildest bazaar rumours are current, and the Persians are said, *inter alia*, to be demanding the cession of Khanikin and equal rights in the Shatt-el-Arab. Contrary to their usual pro-Persian leanings, the Shi'ahs are said to express great disapproval of the Persian policy, which is interpreted as being directed against Iraq as an Arab country, a point of view which finds its justification in the alleged ill-treatment of the Persian Arabs in Khuzistan. The Sunnis are, of course, firm supporters of a Sunni Government against Shi'ah Persia.

9. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran.

I have, &c.

G. OGILVIE-FORBES

Enclosure 1 in No. 162.

(Translation.)

*Dr. Damluji to Sir F. Humphrys.*

(Confidential.)

My dear Ambassador,

*Bagdad, May 10, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to refer to my letter dated the 26th April, 1934, with which I forwarded to you copy of a note which was addressed to the Persian Government concerning the Turkish-Iraqi-Persian Frontier Delimitation Protocol of 1913 and the *procès-verbaux* of the meetings held by the International Commission in 1914.

I wish to explain to your Excellency that the Persian Government, who have on various occasions declared that they do not recognise the protocol in question, continue to act in a manner which confirms their policy in this connexion. With



a view to enabling you to obtain an idea of the nature of Persian (acts of) aggression, I enclose a copy of my letter dated the 18th April, 1934, addressed to the secretariat of the Council of Ministers. In addition, we have been receiving from the Persian Legation communications making unwarranted imputations against Iraqi officials and denying the efforts exerted by the Iraqi authorities in the interests of the Persian Government. The communications of the Legation have lately assumed an increasingly vehement tone, and the Iraqi Government have been accused of assisting bandits and of planning aggression in Persian territory. Your Excellency will plainly see from a letter which I have addressed to the secretariat of the Council of Ministers, dated the 3rd May, 1934 (of which a copy is enclosed, together with a copy of the enclosure thereto,<sup>(1)</sup> namely, a letter from the Persian Minister, Bagdad), the extent of the suspicions entertained by the Persian Government and the object they seek by the multiplication of complaints notwithstanding the efforts made, and which continue to be made, by the Iraqi Government to assist the Persian Government by the despatch of army and police forces for the pursuit of Persian bands and the arrest of criminals; while, on the other hand, the Persian Government continue to procrastinate over compliance with the trifling demands of Iraq and attempt to disturb peace on the borders of Iraq.

A point which I wish to explain to your Excellency is that the policy of the Persian Government and the spirit which they bear towards Iraq have not weakened the resolution of the Iraqi Government to fulfil the obligations of neighbourly and other relations existing between the two countries. On more than one occasion we wrote to the Persian Legation drawing their attention to the delay on the part of the Persian Government in the fulfilment of the demands of Iraq, pointing out the acts committed by the Persian authorities on the borders (of Iraq), contradicting all rumours that had reached them as to the intentions of the Iraqi Government and assuring them of the goodwill of Iraq towards Persia.

I should also explain to your Excellency that the Iraqi Government have adopted all possible measures for the strengthening of the administration and police posts in the frontier zone with a view to closing the frontier in the face of Persian bands and to affording no opportunity for the violation of the Iraqi frontier.

My object in writing this letter is to acquaint your Excellency with the nature of the policy of the Persian Government in order that you may be so good as to bring it to the notice of His Britannic Majesty's Government.

I avail, &c.

ABDULLA DAMLUJI.

Enclosure 2 in No. 162.

*Translation of Letter, dated April 18, 1934, from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to the Secretariat of the Council of Ministers, Bagdad.*

WE forward to you herewith a copy of letter, dated the 1st April, 1934, from the Iraqi Legation, Tehran, incorporating the text<sup>(2)</sup> of a Persian Ministry for Foreign Affairs note, dated the 25th March, 1934, from which you will find that the Persian Government declare that they do not recognise the formal nature of the Frontier Delimitation Protocol of 1914.

The Frontier Delimitation Protocol is the only official document determining the Iraqi-Persian frontier, and it is the instrument which the Iraqi Government invoke in frontier questions arising between Iraq and Persia. What caused the Persian Government to make this declaration is the various protests made by the Iraqi Government against Persian acts of aggression on the Iraqi frontier, protests which were based on the *status quo* as established by the Delimitation Protocol. While this Ministry have already forwarded to you copies of considerable correspondence concerning Persian acts of aggression on the frontiers of Iraq, we nevertheless deem it advisable to give the following summary of cases of this nature for easy reference and in order to give an idea of the situation, which will help in deciding the policy to be adopted towards the Persian Government.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

<sup>(2)</sup> Enclosure 1 in No. 144.

### 1. Basra: Shatt-el-Arab.

According to the Delimitation Protocol the whole of the Shatt-el-Arab falls within the frontiers of Iraq, Persia being left only Abadan, the four islands lying between Shutait and Mawiyah, and two islands situated off the village of Maniuh, all of which form dependencies of Abadan. Persia has, however, ignored the protocol and has been exercising sovereignty in the Shatt as follows:—

- (a) Persian war vessels enter within the Iraq frontier, paying no heed to port instructions and regulations. In the course of conversations with the Port Director, Basra, the Officer Commanding Persian War Vessels in the Shatt-el-Arab and also the Persian consul, Basra, declared that the Persian Government did not recognise the said regulations and instructions, nor did they recognise the existing frontier of the Iraqi Government's ownership of the Shatt-el-Arab as at present.
- (b) Persian motor launches with "amniyah" (police) and customs officers on board enter the Shatt-el-Arab and arrest Iraqi subjects; while Persian soldiers fire on Iraqi and other owners of motor launches plying in the Shatt-el-Arab, on the pretext that they are engaged in smuggling or have violated the frontiers of Persia.

We have on numerous occasions invited the Persian Government's attention to the contraventions committed by their vessels in the Shatt-el-Arab and to the risks involved by the continued commission of such acts, and we have forwarded to them copies of the port instructions. The last communication on the subject of contraventions by Persian war vessels was our note, dated the 15th January, 1934, addressed to the Persian Legation, Bagdad, of which a copy is enclosed herewith,<sup>(1)</sup> and to which no reply has yet been received. Contraventions by war vessels continue, as well as acts of frontier violation.

### 2. Amarah: Posts.

Persian aggression in the Amarah Liwa started in 1931, when the Persian authorities began a propaganda campaign among the Iraqi tribes. This campaign was followed by the ploughing and sowing of a section of the Sharsh lands and the murder of one Iraqi subject, and then by the construction of a motor road, the demolition of frontier pillars, and the construction of three posts within the Iraqi frontier at Sharsh, Liwa and Bujaila, and the connexion of these posts by telephone. Prolonged correspondence having failed to produce any useful result, a commission consisting of military engineers was sent out. This commission reported on the location of these posts, having regard to the Delimitation Protocol, and in their report established the fact of the violation of Iraqi territory by the Persians. The last note addressed to the Persian Government on the basis of the said report was that of which we sent you a copy with our letter dated the 15th April, 1934, and to which the Persian Government have not yet replied. But the reply which the Ministry expect to receive from the Persian Government will, undoubtedly, not differ from their latest reply concerning non-recognition of the Delimitation Protocol.

### 3. Kut Liwa: Mandali and Zarbatiya Waters.

Iraq is entitled to half of the waters of the Gangir in Mandali. It was on the basis of this proportion of the water supply that the Mandali gardens were planted and that Iraqi subjects disposed of agricultural land there. But since 1928 Persia started to take the greater part of these waters, leaving only a small portion to flow into Iraqi territory. Following conversations and diplomatic correspondence between the two Governments, the volume of water allowed to flow into Iraqi territory was, on occasion, actually increased, but only for a short time, after which the water supply was cut off again. Thus the Mandali gardens and plantations have been ruined, only a very small section of them remaining.

The same is the case with Zarbatiya waters. The Persians first began to exploit the Kunjan Cham River in 1930. Later on they constructed dams, part of which fall within the frontiers of Iraq. The Persian argument in defence of the

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.



cutting-off of the water of this river was that the water belonged to the Persians; that the latter were entitled to take all their requirements from it, and that the Iraqis might benefit by such portion as was left. Thus have the gardens and plantations of Zarbatiya been ruined.

#### 4. *Diyala Liwa.*

The Persians demolished frontier pillars in the west of Jabal Maimaik and constructed a post at Ni-Khidr. Following prolonged discussions with the Persian Government a body of experts was sent out by the Ministry of Defence. This body drew up a technical report, in the light of which was drafted the note of our Legation at Tehran dated the 23rd September, 1933. After a number of reminders had been addressed to them, the Persian Government sent out their above-mentioned reply, refusing to recognise the Frontier Protocol as an instrument determining the frontier line between the two States.

#### 5. *Suleimanieh Liwa-Qadha of Halabja.*

The following are the more important questions at dispute:—

- (a) There is in the Qadha of Halabja a village called Biara-Nard, the water supply of which flows down from the Persian village of Hani-Kramlah and accumulates on the Iraqi border. The Persians claim that the locality where these waters accumulate is Persian territory, whereas it is actually Iraqi territory. Acting upon their contention, the Persians are continually violating the frontier at Biarah and breaking through the water dams, although they are unable to benefit from these waters, which only flow into the valleys uselessly.
- (b) They (the Persians) have seized a plot of land in the village of Banawa Suta.
- (c) They have prohibited the Iraqi natives of the village of Tawila passage into the woods belonging to that village and from which the villages obtain their wood.

The latest information reports activities on the part of the Persians with a view to making such use of the waters of the Alwand River as will have an adverse effect on Khanikin; also activities on the part of the Persian authorities in connexion with the enlistment of bandits and the disturbance of peace on the borders of Suleimanieh.

The above is a summary of the more important frontier incidents. As you are aware, there are many subsidiary incidents arising from these major ones, such as the violation of the Iraqi frontier, the disturbance of peace, the dissemination of propaganda among Iraqi tribes, &c., regarding which we had from time to time furnished you with information.

A continuance of these activities will give cause for trouble and will involve the Iraqi Government in considerable expenditure. It appears that the motive behind this conduct of the Persian Government is their aspiration to a modification of the frontier in conformity with their own wishes. They have already in the past alluded to the injustice sustained by them under the Frontier Protocol, pointing out that the latter was drawn up at a time when Persia did not possess a strong constitutional Government representative of the will of the people.

The following are extracts from two notes on this subject received from the Persian Legation, Bagdad:—

- (a) From note dated the 20th September, 1931: "Though the portion of the Frontier Delimitation Agreement relating to the delimitation of the frontier with Iraq has not been officially recognised, nevertheless, . . ."
- (b) From note dated the 2nd December, 1931: "The Imperial Persian Government do not deem the said agreement to have at any time acquired a formal character. They maintain their previous objection until such time as the question has been laid under discussion between the two States and the differences in question have been settled."

I should, however, invite attention to the fact that the frontier delimitation question was among the questions discussed in the course of the meeting between Nuri Pasha Al Said and the Minister of Court, Teymourache, which took place on the 30th September, 1932, when other questions relating to the conclusion of

treaties and agreements with the Persian Government were discussed. On this subject Nuri Pasha said, among other things: "I would invite the attention of the honourable Minister of Court to the necessity of avoiding any arrangement or settlement calculated to result in a modification of the existing frontier, because such arrangement or settlement would be impossible for the Iraqi Government to accept for a variety of reasons and considerations." In a letter received by Nuri Pasha from the Minister of Court on the 3rd November, 1932 (of which a copy was sent to you with our letter dated the 12th November, 1932) the Minister of Court did not say anything to suggest non-recognition of the Frontier Delimitation Protocol. In a letter addressed by us to the Persian Minister, Bagdad, of which a copy was forwarded to you with our letter dated the 2nd May, 1933, we referred to the above understanding reached between Nuri Pasha and the Persian Minister of Court, and asked that the Persian Government should confirm their willingness to enter into negotiations on the bases over which understanding had been reached. The Persian Government have up to now rendered no reply to this letter. Hence their recent declaration signified that there was no definite frontier line separating the two countries. We have, therefore, prepared a reply<sup>(\*)</sup> for communication to the Persian Government through our Tehran Legation, in which we insist on our point of view concerning the protocol and the *procès-verbaux* of the meetings of the International Frontier Delimitation Commission, and on the fact that the frontier determined by the said protocol and described in the *procès-verbaux* of the meetings is final and definite, pointing out that a revision or rectification of the frontier cannot be entertained and expressing our willingness to resume negotiations concerning the treaties and agreements already discussed with the Persian Government, providing that this shall not ultimately lead to an infringement of the sovereign rights of Iraq in any part of her territories or territorial waters as determined by the above-mentioned delimitation.

It is requested that the matter should be laid before the Council of Ministers for approval of the draft reply referred to above and the determination of the Iraqi Government's views as to the policy to be adopted in this connexion.

(\*) Enclosure 2 in No. 144.

[E 3858/1/93]

No. 163.

[C. 244.1934.VII.]

#### LEAGUE OF NATIONS: SETTLEMENT OF THE ASSYRIANS OF IRAQ.

*Report by the Committee to the Council.*—(Received in Foreign Office, June 11.)

THE Committee of the Council has thought it necessary to submit the present report to the Council at its current special session because a new fact has supervened which seriously affects the problem as a whole, and which it considers essential to lay before the Council forthwith, in order that the latter may be able in due time to take such action as the new situation may necessitate.

In its last report to the Council, dated the 15th May (C. 196.1934.VII), the committee reviewed the efforts it had made to perform the task which the Council had entrusted to it in October 1933, and which consisted in examining to what extent the settlement outside Iraq of the Assyrians who might wish to leave the country might be practicable. It will be remembered that this task was entrusted to the committee in order to help the Iraqi Government, and at the latter's express request.

The report dealt mainly with the plan for settlement on land situated in the State of Parana, in Brazil. In January the Brazilian Government declared its willingness, subject to certain conditions, to authorise the settlement of the Assyrians on this land, and the Council, in its resolution of the 19th January, 1934, warmly thanked it for this authorisation. Before discussing the conditions of settlement in detail, the committee thought it necessary to satisfy itself first of all that the Assyrians would adapt themselves to the conditions existing in the Parana and would become a useful element for Brazil. Accordingly, with the Brazilian Government's consent and with the Council's approval, a mission was sent to the region in question. The committee's report to the Council, dated the 15th May, summarised the conclusions reached by this mission.



But while the mission's report was absolutely favourable as regards its technical conclusions, it confirmed and supplemented the information already received by the committee with regard to growing opposition in Brazil to the arrival of the Assyrians. A press campaign, which found ardent supporters and propagandists, and which had serious repercussions, even in Parliament, developed in Brazil, and seemed to compromise seriously the final success of the plan.

Nevertheless, the committee still retained the hope that the Brazilian plan might finally be adopted. In any case, it realised that, apart from the above-mentioned campaign, the transfer of the Assyrians raised numerous delicate problems, and in its report to the Council of the 15th May it informed the Council that it could not say at that moment whether the plan would eventually be carried out. The report also said that as soon as circumstances permitted detailed negotiations would have to be entered into with the Brazilian Government in order to draw up a plan which would be acceptable to that Government. The committee had already taken unofficial steps to discover the most favourable moment for opening official negotiations, and had adjourned to await a reply. One week later, however, on the 25th May, 1934, the committee learnt that the Brazilian Constituent Assembly had voted the insertion, in the draft Constitution which it was examining, of a provision stipulating that immigration from any particular country should not exceed in any one year 2 per cent. of the total number of nationals of that country who had settled in Brazil during the last fifty years, and that the concentration of emigrants in any part of the national territory would be prohibited. As this measure seemed to remove all hope of settling the Assyrians in Brazil, the committee immediately met to study the new situation.

The committee decided to ask the Brazilian Government whether the offer made last January was really to be regarded as impracticable and as having been withdrawn.

The committee learnt on the 2nd June, 1934, that the Brazilian Government considered the arrival of the Assyrians as impossible in view of Parliament's decision.

During the long meetings which have recently been held, the committee has considered whether there were serious reasons for still hoping that land could be found for the settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq elsewhere than in Brazil.

We may recall here what was said in the report of the 15th May:—

"In its search for a suitable destination for the Assyrians the committee felt bound to explore a wide field, and there is no continent in the world in which it has not considered possibilities."

But, as was to be expected, in view of the universal depression and unemployment and of the laws restricting all immigration, and as, indeed, the Council itself had anticipated, the committee encountered considerable difficulties. In certain cases it received definitely negative replies; in others the replies were not absolutely negative, but very discouraging; in other cases, again, it has not yet received a definite reply.

During the committee's deliberations on the steps that should now be taken, two views were discussed. One was that the committee might forthwith, without undertaking any further consultations, say that it was impossible, at the present juncture, to find any countries that were prepared to accept mass immigration on such a large scale. The contrary view was that, until it had exhausted every possibility and made every effort, the committee could not say whether it was possible to find lands or not. In support of this latter opinion it was observed that, from the outset of its work, the committee had concentrated its attention on the Brazilian plan, on account of the prospects of a speedy solution which it offered, and that, from the moment when, in its report to the Council, the committee had announced that the possibility of a settlement in Brazil was being thoroughly investigated, the other Governments consulted probably regarded themselves as thereby less bound to pursue their examination of the problem until a decision should have been reached as to the Brazilian plan. According to this view, the committee ought to make a fresh attempt without delay, because the attitude of the Governments so far consulted might be influenced if they knew that the Brazilian plan had failed, and if they could be convinced of the urgency of the question.

In any case, if a fresh effort were to be made to find lands, a fairly long period must be expected to elapse before the settlement of the Assyrians could actually take place. The committee sincerely trusts that this circumstance will have no unfortunate influence on the situation in Iraq. It felt that the Council should be fully informed of the present state of affairs.

The committee desires to remark that, when setting up the committee and defining its terms of reference, the Council expressed the hope that "until it has been possible to put into effect the arrangements" for the emigration of the Assyrians, "the Iraqi Government will be good enough to keep the committee regularly informed of the measures taken to ensure the safety of the Assyrians in Iraq, to assist the families left destitute in consequence of those events, and to rebuild those villages which have been wholly or partially destroyed through the same events." The Iraqi Government has sent reports, which the committee has carefully studied, and regarding which it has asked the Iraqi Government for further information and details.

Clearly, however, the committee can in no case be responsible for any consequences the Assyrians might suffer owing to the delay in discovering a suitable site for their settlement or the impossibility of finding such a site.

When, at a recent meeting, the committee informed the representative of Iraq of the new situation created by the Brazilian Government's negative decision, it nevertheless felt bound to remind him of the solemn undertakings entered into by the Iraqi Government with regard to the safety and well-being of the Assyrians.

Geneva, June 5, 1934.

[E 3856/1/93]

No. 164.

*United Kingdom Delegate to Foreign Office.—(Received June 11.)*

(No. 80.)

THE United Kingdom delegate to the League of Nations presents his compliments, and has the honour to transmit copies of a record of the thirty-second meeting of the Council Committee on the 8th June, respecting the Assyrian question, of which a copy has been sent to His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad.

*United Kingdom Delegation,  
Geneva, June 10, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 164.

ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

*Record of Thirty-Second Meeting of the Council Committee held on June 8  
at 10 A.M.*

THE meeting was attended by Mr. Johnson of the Nansen Office.

The President explained to Mr. Johnson that in pursuance of the Council's resolution of the previous day the committee now proposed to make further efforts to find a place of settlement for the Assyrians, and they would be grateful for any suggestions which the Nansen Office could make regarding possible destinations.

Mr. Johnson said that he had only just received the committee's report to the Council and the *rapporteur's* report upon it. He himself was in a somewhat difficult position as the president of the Nansen Office was at present ill in a nursing home and it had been specially requested that he should not be troubled with business during the whole of the present week. He had not, therefore, felt justified, until he knew what exactly the committee wished, in discussing the question of Assyrian settlement with him since the breakdown of the Brazilian scheme. He himself was instructed by his governing body to help the Council Committee in regard to the Brazilian scheme, but his instructions were at present



limited to that. He did not wish in any way to suggest that the governing body would not be prepared to co-operate in finding an alternative solution. He could not, however, commit them, and he suggested if the committee desired this co-operation they should address a communication in that sense to the governing body. With that reservation, Mr. Johnson observed that he knew there were other possibilities which appeared worth consideration.

*The President* said that his request was so simple that he did not think it necessary to address a formal communication to the Nansen Office. Naturally, he did not wish Mr. Johnson to go beyond his instructions or to commit the governing body in any way. But the committee merely desired to have an indication of possibilities elsewhere than in Brazil in the light of the Nansen Office's experience. He did not wish to press Mr. Johnson, however, if the latter did not think he could go even so far as this.

*Mr. Johnson* said that, on the contrary, he was perfectly ready to indicate certain possibilities. He observed that while the Brazilian scheme was under consideration he had submitted an alternative proposal for settlement in Misiones in the Argentine. In addition to this, there were other prospects in the Argentine which, at first sight, seemed attractive. The Nansen Office also knew of possibilities in Bolivia and in Paraguay, and from the purely technical point of view, at all events, the prospects were good in these two countries. Moreover, Mr. Johnson understood that several countries had recently indicated their willingness to take fairly large bodies of Jewish refugees from Germany. His information was to the effect that offers had been received from Mexico, British Honduras, Angola, Tanganyika, Kenya, South-West Africa, Ecuador and Colombia. He would be glad to obtain more detailed information about these offers and to see whether they could, if necessary, be adapted to the case of the Assyrian refugees. He suggested that three other countries deserving of consideration were Abyssinia, the Belgian Congo and Mozambique.

*The President* asked two questions. When Mr. Johnson said that these areas were possible, did he mean that they were possible merely from the technical point of view, or that the countries concerned were prepared to authorise Assyrian immigration? The president recalled that in Brazil the technical possibilities had been good, but that the scheme had broken down because of the failure of the Government to authorise immigration.

*Mr. Johnson* said that in the Argentine, Bolivia and Paraguay, the prospects were good from the technical point of view. Moreover, the Nansen Office had already sent Russian refugees to these countries. As regards the other countries which he had mentioned, he was not aware of the attitude of the Governments concerned. He understood, however, that they were willing to accept Jewish refugees from Germany.

*The President* took note of what Mr. Johnson had said, and added that the committee would begin the necessary exploration and if it found the Governments concerned ready to consider Assyrian immigration, it would probably take the same course as in the case of Brazil of inviting the co-operation of the Nansen Office.

*The Danish Representative* asked whether, when Mr. Johnson said that certain schemes were suitable from the technical point of view, he was to be understood as meaning that they were climatically suitable.

*Mr. Johnson* replied that in his opinion the countries mentioned were suitable both from the climatic point of view and from the point of view of general settlement.

He asked whether he was to understand that it was still the desire of the committee that the Nansen Office, in exploring possibilities, should not approach the Governments concerned. In this connexion he wished to point out that direct approach to Governments was not necessarily the best method of procedure. His experience had suggested that approaches to private interests offered the best prospect of success. The Nansen Office in its early days had begun by sending out broadcast appeals to Governments. These had been without result, and it had had to proceed on other lines—namely, to interest private concerns in certain proposals and work through those private concerns. Governments, if approached

direct, were apt to return negative replies, as no Government really wanted refugees. On the other hand, if the Nansen Office were in a position to inform private interests that it had certain refugees for settlement who were likely to be satisfactory, influence could be brought to bear on the Governments concerned.

*The Danish Representative* asked whether this was not a question of history rather than actuality. Was it possible, under present conditions, to ask private interests to take as many as 20,000 immigrants? In any case, recent experience in Brazil had shown the disappointments which were likely when working through private interests.

*The President* said that the committee would bear in mind Mr. Johnson's observations, and, when it had decided how to proceed, it would no doubt ask the Nansen Office for further assistance.

(Mr. Johnson then withdrew.)

*The President* then asked the committee to consider what Governments should now be approached in pursuance of the Council's resolution of the 7th June. The Secretariat had prepared a list of possible countries, and these were grouped according to varying conditions. It was proposed to send a letter in the first place to certain members of the committee, namely Spain, the United Kingdom, France and Italy. In the case of Canada and the Argentine, from whom so far no reply had been received, a rather different form of letter would be required. Again, it would be necessary to press Australia, South Africa, and possibly New Zealand, to reconsider their previous decisions, and it was proposed that appeals should be made to certain countries not hitherto approached, namely, Turkey, Greece, Holland and Portugal. In view of Mr. Johnson's remarks, the committee should perhaps consider also Bolivia and Paraguay. As certain members of the committee could spare little time in view of other meetings, he suggested that the meeting should merely agree upon the general lines of the drafts to be sent out, leaving it to the president to approve the actual text.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that he had discussed possible drafts with the League Secretariat. So far as the countries represented on the committee were concerned, there was no difficulty. The Governments knew the facts and the importance and urgency of the problem. A simple appeal was all that was required. As regards other Governments, however, there was a point of principle on which the committee should take a decision. The original intention of the Secretariat had been to send out short letters, simply containing a collection of documents leading up to the proceedings of the Council on the 7th June, and enquiring whether the Governments concerned were now prepared to consider favourably the possibility of receiving the Assyrians. In his view, this was not enough. The committee ought now to make a great final effort. He thought that if a mere enquiry and a number of documents were sent to Governments, the enquiry would not be very seriously considered. He thought that the letters ought to contain a recapitulation of the problem, so as to bring its importance and urgency at once to the attention of Governments.

There was general agreement with the proposal of the United Kingdom representative, and it was decided that drafts should be circulated during the day, and that, if possible, the members of the committee should inform the president on the same day of any observations which they wished to make. In the absence of such observations by 7 P.M., the president would assume that the drafts were approved.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that he had been thinking over the question whether it was worth while approaching Australia and New Zealand again. He understood that, in the case of Australia, even if the political difficulties could be overcome, the only territory which might be made available was in the north-west. It was undeveloped territory, and settlement there would be a long and gradual process, even if investigation showed it to be practicable. The possibility could not, of course, be ruled out on that account, and he thought Australia ought to be approached once more. In the case of New Zealand, however, he did not think any useful purpose would be served by a fresh approach.

It was agreed to approach Australia, but not New Zealand.



*The President* then raised the question of communicating to the Assyrians the terms of the Council's resolution of the 7th June. His view was that it would be most appropriate for the position to be explained to the Assyrians by the Iraqi Government, and, if the committee agreed, he would suggest to the Iraqi representative that his Government should take this course through the medium of the local committee under Major Thomson's presidency.

The president was authorised to act accordingly.

*The President* then referred to the request which the French representative had made at the previous meeting regarding an approach to the Nansen Office, in order to have instructions sent to M. Burnier to co-operate with the French authorities in Syria in regard to the transfer to Syria of the families now in Iraq of those Assyrians who fled to Syria last summer.

The president suggested that the committee should take note of the present position of this question, and should send a letter to the Nansen Office on the lines desired by the French representative.

*The French Representative* said that he would like the letter to the Nansen Office to mention the French Government's letter of the 9th January (C.Min.Ass.18), and he hoped that the Nansen Office might be approached urgently and asked to send telegraphic instructions to M. Burnier.

*M. Arocha* questioned the advisability of sending the French Government's letter of the 9th January to the Nansen Office. The first condition laid down in that letter was that the French Government should act under a mandate from the Council of the League, and it was not within the power of the committee to decide upon such a mandate.

*The French Representative* said that the important points were the third and fourth conditions laid down in the French Government's letter of the 9th January. The French Government were particularly anxious to have the assistance of the Nansen Office representative in certain aspects of the question. They attached particular importance to the accounts being kept by a neutral person.

It was agreed that the French representative and *M. Arocha* should draw up the terms of a draft letter to the Nansen Office for the president's approval.

*The Danish Representative* referred to a proposal which had been made at an earlier meeting, that a letter should be addressed to the Spanish Ambassador in Rio de Janeiro, thanking him for the work he had done on behalf of the committee in connexion with the Brazilian scheme.

*The President* suggested that the drafting of this letter should be left to him.

*The Danish Representative* said that he would like the letter to be more than a mere formality. He thought that the Spanish Ambassador had had a very difficult and disagreeable task, and had made great efforts on behalf of the committee. Moreover, his judgment throughout had been justified by events, and he would like the letter of thanks to be a very warm tribute to the Ambassador.

*The United Kingdom Representative* associated himself with this suggestion.

*M. Arocha* raised the question whether the letters which it was proposed to address to various Governments should be communicated for information to the Iraqi representative.

It was agreed that this should be done.

*The President* observed that certain explanations which the Iraqi representative had been asked to obtain regarding the situation reports of his Government had never been received. He thought that the Iraqi representative ought to be reminded, and while he was perfectly prepared to do this orally, he preferred to do it by letter.

It was agreed that this would be preferable in order to mark the importance which the committee attached to the matter, though the letters should, of course, be worded very courteously.

A further short discussion took place regarding the appeals to Governments, and it was agreed that, in present circumstances, it would be preferable not to approach Bolivia or Paraguay. It was decided, however, to approach Belgium in relation to the Belgian Congo.

*The President* said that, as regards future procedure, he did not think it was necessary for the committee to meet again unless serious difficulties arose regarding the draft appeals to various Governments. The next meeting must therefore depend on when replies were received to these appeals. It might not be necessary for the committee to meet until all the replies were received. If, however, within a reasonable time of the Council meeting in September—say, one month previously—replies were still outstanding, the president would consider himself justified in calling a new meeting of the committee, in order to bring further pressure to bear on the Governments concerned.

J. C. STERNDAL BENNETT.

[E 3873/1/93]

No. 165.

[C. 245.1934.VII.]

# LEAGUE OF NATIONS: SETTLEMENT OF THE ASSYRIANS OF IRAQ.

*Report by the Representative of Spain.*—(Received in Foreign Office, June 12.)

MY colleagues on the Council will no doubt have learnt with regret from the report which the Committee of the Council has just submitted to us, that the hope of settling in Brazil the Assyrians of Iraq wishing to leave that country can no longer be realised.

I feel it my duty to point out incidentally that the Brazilian Government's decision is not directed against the settlement of the Assyrians in particular, but is a general measure, a new law which restricts all immigration into Brazil from whatever country it may come. The laws restricting immigration, which are almost universally adopted nowadays, have been one of the most serious obstacles, but not the only one, which our committee has encountered in the performance of its task. Its report gives us the details, and describes a situation which, in my opinion, calls for the Council's most serious attention.

It will be seen from this report that the committee's efforts—and we all know how great and unremitting they have been—have had no success up to the present; that, even assuming it to be possible, it will be very difficult to find land at the present time; and that, in the most favourable hypothesis, the Assyrians will have to remain in Iraq for a much longer time than had been anticipated.

What will be the consequences as regards the situation of the Assyrians of Iraq, who had conceived great hopes, and had for many months been living in expectation of an early departure? The Council has not yet forgotten the tragic events of last year; nor has it forgotten the guarantees, the pledges, and the solemn declarations of the Iraqi Government, and it cannot doubt that Government's good faith and its ability to observe these pledges. When the mandatory régime came to an end on the 30th May, 1932, the Kingdom of Iraq made a declaration at Bagdad containing the guarantees given to the Council by the Iraqi Government. In chapter I, paragraph 2, article 1 of this declaration reads: "Full and complete protection of life and liberty will be assured to all inhabitants of Iraq, without distinction of birth, nationality, language, race or religion."

Moreover, at this same Council table, as well as in the committee, the representatives of Iraq have repeatedly made formal declarations and assumed a definite undertaking on behalf of their Government, not only to guarantee the security of the Assyrians, but to succour them and provide for their welfare during the whole of the time they may still have to remain in Iraq.

It will be incumbent on the Governments to which the committee may apply to assist it in its task, and on the Iraqi Government to abide by its undertaking regarding the security and welfare of the Assyrians. If you accept this report and the resolution your *rapporteur* is submitting to you, the Council will confine itself to making a last effort through its committee to find land, and if it succeeds,



to preparing a plan in close co-operation with the Iraqi Government for the settlement of the Assyrians who may express the desire to emigrate.

I propose that the Council adopt the following resolution:—

The Council,

1. Takes note of the report of the Committee of the Council for the settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq;
2. Approves the report of its *rapporteur*, the representative of Spain;
3. Instructs the Committee of the Council to persist in its efforts, and to make fresh representations to the Governments of countries the territories of which might lend themselves to the settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq who express the desire to leave that country, in order that it may be able, as soon as possible, to inform the Council definitely whether the settlement of these Assyrians elsewhere than in Iraq is at present realisable;
4. Addresses an urgent appeal to the Governments to which the Committee of the Council may make requests, to give favourable consideration to such requests, and to facilitate the committee's task in view of the great importance of the problem;
5. Draws the Iraqi Government's special attention to its declaration made at Bagdad on the 30th May, 1932, on the occasion of the expiration of the mandatory system in Iraq, and containing the guarantees given to the Council by the Iraqi Government, in pursuance of which it formally pledged itself, among other things, to afford all inhabitants of Iraq full and complete protection of life and liberty, without distinction of birth, nationality, language, race or religion;
6. Notes that the representative of Iraq has on several occasions given assurances to the Committee of the Council that Iraq would take measures in favour of the Assyrian population, more particularly in the matter of security, health and assistance, while the efforts to arrange an emigration plan were in progress.

Geneva, June 5, 1934.

[E 3973/1/93]

No. 166.

M. Oliván to Sir John Simon.—(Received June 16.)

League of Nations,

Geneva, June 11, 1934.

Sir,

THE Government of the United Kingdom will be aware of the efforts made by the Committee of the Council for the Settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq, on which they are represented, to fulfil the task laid upon it by the Council on the 14th October, 1933.

In its report to the Council of the 5th June, the committee was obliged to record the failure of a scheme for settlement in Brazil on which it had hitherto concentrated its main efforts. I enclose a copy of this report<sup>(1)</sup> and of the report<sup>(2)</sup> upon it by the Council's *rapporteur* and of the resolution<sup>(3)</sup> adopted by the Council on the 7th June, 1934.

In pursuance of this resolution the committee now addresses an appeal, among others, to the Government of the United Kingdom.

The committee believes that the Government of the United Kingdom have already had under consideration, but so far without favourable result, the possibility of settling the Assyrians in the overseas territories under their jurisdiction. It ventures, however, to urge that this question may now be reconsidered in the light, not only of its urgent humanitarian aspect, but also of the difficulties which are to be anticipated if the Assyrian problem cannot be solved by the settlement outside Iraq of those members of the community who wish to leave that country and have declared their inability to remain there under present conditions. The Government of the United Kingdom, in view of their specially close relations with Iraq, will certainly realise the importance of this problem.

<sup>(1)</sup> No. 168.

<sup>(2)</sup> No. 165.

The enclosed documents show the concern of the committee and of the Council regarding the situation of the Assyrians of Iraq if the search for a place of settlement elsewhere should be prolonged, and I venture to draw attention in particular to the fourth paragraph of the Council's resolution of the 7th June, and to express the hope that the Government of the United Kingdom will be good enough to facilitate the committee's task by giving urgent consideration to the present appeal.

I have, &c.

J. LOPEZ OLIVAN,

President of the Committee for the Settlement  
of the Assyrians of Iraq.

[E 3973/1/93]

No. 167.

Foreign Office to Colonial Office.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 21, 1934.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir John Simon to invite a reference to correspondence ending with Colonial Office letter of the 6th January last regarding the possibility of settling in the Colonial Empire those Assyrians who wish to leave Iraq.

2. The Committee of the Council of the League, which was charged by the Council in October last with the task of investigating whether the settlement of these Assyrians outside Iraq was practicable, has hitherto concentrated on a plan for settlement in the State of Paraná in Brazil, but this plan has now had to be abandoned, owing to the recent adoption by the Brazilian Constituent Assembly of a restrictive measure on immigration in general. No suitable alternative destination has yet presented itself, but the Council of the League on the 7th June decided that a final effort to find one should be made, and accordingly instructed its committee to make fresh representations to the Governments of countries whose territories might lend themselves to Assyrian settlement, with a view to informing the Council definitely, and as soon as possible, whether the settlement of the Assyrians outside Iraq was realisable. The Council, in the same resolution, addressed an urgent appeal to the Governments to which the committee might make requests to give favourable consideration to such requests and to facilitate the committee's task in view of the great importance of the problem.

3. In pursuance of this decision the committee at once decided to address appeals to the Governments of the following countries in respect either of their home or of their overseas territories: the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Spain, Australia, South Africa, Canada, Argentina, Colombia, Greece, Portugal, The Netherlands, Belgium and Turkey.

4. A copy of the appeal addressed to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom is enclosed herein.<sup>(1)</sup>

5. There is no indication at present that any of the Governments approached, some of which have already returned negative or discouraging replies to earlier enquiries, are likely to give favourable consideration to the appeal now addressed to them. Indeed, the majority of the Council Committee appear to regard the appeal as being in the nature of a necessary formality preparatory to measures for the permanent resettlement of the Assyrians in Iraq.

6. The enclosed appeal draws attention, however, to the serious difficulties which are to be anticipated if the Assyrian problem cannot be solved by the settlement outside Iraq of those members of the community who wish to leave Iraq and have declared their inability to remain there under existing conditions. These difficulties would have a special importance for His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, who, in view of their past and present connexion with Iraq, might quickly find themselves in a position of great embarrassment and difficulty.

7. In the first place, the Secretary of State for the Colonies will be aware that there is a strong feeling, not only abroad, but also in certain circles in this

<sup>(1)</sup> No. 166.



country, that responsibility for the present plight of the Assyrians lies with His Majesty's Government. In point of fact His Majesty's Government are under no specific obligation towards the Assyrians and the statement made before the Permanent Mandates Commission in 1931 regarding the "moral responsibility" of His Majesty's Government in connexion with the termination of the mandatory régime can only be applied to the present case by distorting both the meaning of the statement itself and by ignoring the part which some of the Assyrian leaders played in bringing disaster upon the community. Nevertheless, in view of that statement and of the past and present connexion of His Majesty's Government with Iraq, and with the Assyrians, and more particularly of the fact that a considerable number of Assyrians are still employed by His Majesty's Government as soldiers in the Iraq levies, which guard the Royal Air Force aerodromes in Iraq, His Majesty's Government have a special interest in the solution of the Assyrian problem and a total disclaimer of responsibility would be neither politic nor convincing. There is no doubt that the Assyrian troubles of last summer severely damaged the credit of His Majesty's Government in the eyes of States members of the League of Nations, and there is every reason to fear that that credit will suffer still further damage if His Majesty's Government fail to offer practical assistance towards the resettlement of the Assyrians outside Iraq. Were it possible to find land in some other foreign country or in one of the Dominions, this assistance might in certain circumstances be financial in character, but if no Dominion or foreign country is prepared to receive the Assyrians, there is no way in which His Majesty's Government can assist, except by finding land within the Colonial Empire in which the Assyrians can settle.

8. I am to point out that, so far as His Majesty's Government are concerned, it is a question not merely of prestige or credit, though that is important, but of the serious practical dangers which are to be anticipated if the Assyrians are compelled to remain in Iraq.

9. It may be thought that if it were demonstrated to the Assyrians that their settlement outside Iraq was not practicable, they would accept the situation and settle down in Iraq, forgetting gradually the massacre of last summer as similar massacres have been forgotten in the past in oriental countries. This, however, is not the view of qualified observers. It must be remembered that a certain section of the Assyrians, namely, the Upper Tiari and Tkhuma tribes, who constitute the immediate followers of the Mar Shimun, have never been willing to settle permanently in Iraq, except under conditions which are impossible of fulfilment, while the view of the remainder may be expected to be powerfully affected by the fact that, in the massacres and looting of last August, no distinction was made between those Assyrians who had taken part in the previous fighting and those who had remained peaceably in their villages as loyal supporters of the Iraqi Government. These events have inevitably left behind them a feeling of bitterness and consequently a certain tension. Moreover, they have reduced a proportion of the Assyrians to a state bordering on destitution.

10. While there appears to be no immediate prospect of a further massacre deliberately organised or encouraged by the Iraqi civil or military authorities, there is the constant danger of untoward results arriving from the rash or provocative acts of minor officials. The Assyrians still possess a number of British rifles earned during service in the levies, and if faced with the prospect of permanent settlement in Iraq—or even of long delay in settlement elsewhere—they may be driven to some act of desperation. In any case, further attempts to settle them permanently in Iraq are likely to lead to constant friction with their Kurdish or Arab neighbours or with the Iraqi authorities, which may at any moment produce an incident. His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad, who is at present on leave in this country and has recently been consulted, feels strongly that every effort must be made to find a home for the Assyrians outside Iraq, and considers that it is necessary to remove from Iraq at least 7,000 of the Assyrians at the earliest possible moment if a very critical and dangerous situation is to be avoided.

11. Further bloodshed might have very far-reaching consequences. When the massacre took place last summer, there was reason to fear that in certain circumstances it might spread to other Christians and develop eventually into an anti-British and anti-foreign movement. This danger will be present in any future disturbance, whether its origin is some act of desperation on the part of the Assyrians, or whether it begins with some outrage against them; for the

Assyrians are looked upon as the special protégés of His Majesty's Government, and, together with the other minorities of Iraq, are, in a sense, protégés of the League of Nations in virtue of the guarantees given by Iraq in return for the termination of the mandatory régime.

12. It is clear that, in view of the special position which His Majesty's Government occupy in Iraq, quite apart from the complicating factor that the guarding of the Royal Air Force aerodromes is largely in the hands of the Assyrian members of the levies, this country would inevitably be involved in any fresh disturbance. As a member of the Council of the League, which is responsible for supervising the execution of the Iraqi Declaration of Guarantees, as the ally of Iraq under the treaty of 1930, and as the employer of a considerable number of Assyrian troops in Iraq, His Majesty's Government would be in a position of the gravest embarrassment and difficulty. The reactions could hardly fail to affect the whole position of this country in Iraq and the many and important British interests there, and even the prospect of some form of military action, if only to ensure the safety of existing air establishments, cannot be ruled out.

13. In view of the extremely serious issues involved, Sir John Simon feels strongly that it is in the interests of this country that a further attempt should be made to find land in the Colonial Empire on which the Assyrians could be settled, and he is glad to learn that, following a discussion with Sir Francis Humphrys, Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister is prepared to investigate the possibilities afresh. Sir John Simon fully realises the difficulties involved, but trusts that every effort will be made to overcome them. In this connexion, I am to observe that while it has hitherto been the aim of the Council Committee to find a destination where all the Assyrians of Iraq, estimated at some 20,000 persons, can be settled together if they so desire, the possibility of settlement in two separate groups—not necessarily far apart—has had to be envisaged in view of reports that the Assyrians are at present divided into two approximately equal groups, one of which is said to be dissatisfied with the policy of the Mar Shimun and to be unwilling to be settled under his ægis. Sir John Simon suggests, therefore, that, though desirable, it should not be regarded as essential, to find a place within the Colonial Empire within which the Assyrians can, if necessary, be settled in a single compact group, and that His Majesty's Government should not be deterred from putting forward even a scheme for settlement in more than two separate groups, in different territories, if this is the best that can be devised.

14. For convenience of reference I am to enclose a memorandum<sup>(1)</sup> giving in brief outline the recent history of the Assyrian problem together with some notes on the origin, organisation and characteristics of the Assyrians.

15. Finally, I am to emphasise the urgency of a decision in this matter. The Council Committee, prompted by growing concern regarding the situation of the Assyrians in Iraq and the possible effect upon it of delay, is anxious to report definitely to the Council in September next whether their settlement outside Iraq is practicable or not. The committee's concern does not only relate to the question of the security and welfare of those Assyrians who have remained in or returned to their villages. Some 1,500 dependants of those who were killed last summer or who fled to Syria are still being maintained by the Iraqi Government in a camp at Mosul, but it is understood that funds for the maintenance of this camp are only available until September. Any proposal to allocate further funds for this purpose is sure to meet with opposition from Iraqi nationalists. An even more serious problem is raised by the presence in Mosul, outside the refugee camp, of a large number of Assyrians, who fled there from their villages during the disturbances ten months ago. Efforts have been made to induce them to return to their villages and to resume their normal life pending emigration, but distrust has rendered such efforts only partially successful. These Assyrians have hitherto been maintained chiefly by their friends and relations, whose resources are, however, dwindling. The situation is thus likely to become increasingly precarious as time goes on, and as the hope of settlement elsewhere is deferred. If no progress can be made with resettlement before the winter, the prospect is a serious one. It is most desirable, therefore, that His Majesty's Government should be in a position before September to inform the Council Committee whether they are prepared in principle to find a place of settlement for the Assyrians in the

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.



territories under their jurisdiction, even though it should prove impossible before that date to work out a concrete scheme in all its details.

16. Copies of this letter are being sent to the Air Ministry, India Office, Dominions Office, War Office and Treasury.

I am, &c.  
C. F. A. WARNER.

[E 4148/1/93]

No. 168.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received June 25.)*

(No. 332.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, June 14, 1934.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 130 of the 13th June, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a letter from Sir Kinahan Cornwallis conveying the opinions of the Administrative Inspector, Mosul, and of Major Thomson, Assyrian Settlement Officer, and his own covering remarks on the situation which is likely to arise as the result of the failure hitherto of the League of Nations to find another home for the Assyrians.

2. As the bag is about to close, I defer comment, although I have in my recent telegrams dealt with many of the points raised by these gentlemen. I would, nevertheless, draw special attention to Sir Kinahan's remarks on the pressing necessity for persuading the Syrian authorities to accept the dependants of the internees on the understanding that the Iraqi Government charge the expense thus incurred to the sum eventually voted for a general exodus. In view of the unsatisfactory relations existing between the Iraqi Government and the French mandatory authorities in Syria, I consider that, unless pressure be brought to bear by Paris on Beirut, the prospects of reaching an agreement on the subject are remote.

I have, &c.  
G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

Enclosure 1 in No. 168.

*Sir K. Cornwallis to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes.*

Dear Ogilvie-Forbes,

*Bagdad, June 13, 1934.*

I FORWARD a copy of D.O. No. 673 of the 9th instant from Thomson and D.O. No. 73 of the 10th instant from Wilson on the subject of the situation which is likely to arise as a result of the League's failure to find another home for the Assyrians. Both, as you will see, are uneasy. They find it difficult to visualise the future clearly, but sense the possibility of trouble from several directions. Wilson emphasises the dangers of attempting to resettle the Assyrians permanently in Iraq; they both think that an immediate declaration by His Britannic Majesty's Government that it will assume responsibility for the future home of Assyrians who wish to leave Iraq is the best, if not the only, method of stabilising the situation.

These two officials are in a far better position to judge of what may happen locally than we are, and I do not think that they have drawn an exaggerated picture of the potential sources of trouble. I think, however, that the administration should be able to cope with them. Ever since my return from leave it has been my object to strengthen the personnel of Mosul liwa, and, as a result, the mutessarif and all the kaïmakams are picked men. If they cannot succeed in keeping order with the help of Wilson and Thomson, the incapacity of the Iraqi to govern in difficult circumstances will stand revealed.

There is no reason to fear at present that the chaotic conditions which existed last summer will recur. Not only is the standard of the local administration higher, but the feeling that the central administration will condone excesses is absent. When the fear of the Assyrian menace was removed, it was realised that massacres are not good policy.

My main anxieties at the moment are twofold: firstly, that the pro-Mar Shimun hotheads will commit some foolish action in their disappointment which

will compel the local authorities to deal with them drastically; and, secondly, that with the cutting off of Government assistance, destitution will grow to proportions which will gravely embarrass the Government and bring discredit on it in the eyes of Europe. It is difficult to estimate the seriousness of the first because the Assyrians are such an incalculable quantity. My information is that the pro-Mar Shimun Assyrians at present have no fight in them; their reaction to disappointment will, however, have to be carefully watched.

As regards the second point, I fear that we are in for trouble.

The mutessarif, in his C/151 of the 8th June, 1934, of which I enclose a translation, has proposed a scheme for closing the camp and distributing most of the inmates amongst the villages at a cost of slightly over I.D. 3,000. Wilson has extended this, and suggests spending I.D. 11,668 in order to provide for the Assyrians for another year.

Both schemes envisage the departure of the families of the Assyrians in Syria to Syria.

The mutessarif's proposals are under examination in the Ministry and no decision has yet been taken. The Prime Minister, as I have told you, is prepared to charge the expenses of the exodus to Syria against the sum which is eventually voted for the general exodus, but I see little prospect of extra money being voted to help those who remain behind. It is therefore a matter of pressing necessity that the Syrian authorities should be persuaded to accept the families, because with every day that they remain, the balance of the budgetary provision of I.D. 6,000 which is now required for the dispersal of the camp is dwindling. I understand that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is pressing M. Lépissier for a reply, but I am not sanguine of the result. This is a matter which we have already discussed privately.

I fear that, if the families go to Syria, the local authorities will have great difficulty in persuading the remaining inmates of the camp, who are now well imbued with the refugee complex, to live in the villages.

I see no other solution unless some philanthropist unexpectedly assumes the responsibility of maintaining the camp. In any case, money will be required during the next year for the provision of clothes and other necessities which are not included in the schemes of Wilson and the mutessarif. Many cases of destitution will also undoubtedly occur, and I hope that His Britannic Majesty's Government will encourage the raising of funds in England.

On the larger issue, I feel with Wilson and Thomson that no solution is likely to be found unless His Britannic Majesty's Government assume responsibility and put pressure on one of the colonial Governments to accept those Assyrians who wish to leave.

Yours sincerely,  
K. CORNWALLIS.

Enclosure 2 in No. 168.

*Copy of D.O. 673 of June 9, 1934, from Major D. B. Thomson, Assyrian Relief Committee, Mosul, to Sir K. Cornwallis, Adviser, Ministry of Interior, Bagdad.*

I UNDERSTAND that the Brazilian Government has definitely refused to accept the Assyrians as immigrants.

The reactions in Iraq following on this decision may be very serious and far-reaching.

*Assyrians.*

The mentality of the Assyrians is such that it is not possible to form any definite opinion on what the repercussions will be amongst them.

Those who are followers of the Mar Shimun have lived for the last nine months buoyed up by the hopes of their immigration during the present summer. They will undoubtedly be very depressed by the news, which may lead some of the more irresponsible of the Mar Shimun's followers to actions the consequences of which might be disastrous.

It has only been by tactful handling that unfortunate incidents have been avoided during the past nine months. Undoubtedly the Assyrians will lose some



of their confidence in those who have been dealing directly with them, even though it has always been impressed upon them that there was no definite reason to believe that Brazil was to be their ultimate home.

#### *Kurds.*

The Kurds have been kept in hand very successfully, but it is questionable whether they will not assume, when they hear that immigration of the Assyrians is postponed, that it is to be for an indefinite period. Should they interpret the position in this way, then I believe there will very possibly be a marked recurrence of the thefts, murders, &c., which were more or less prevalent in the past.

It must be remembered that the Kurds in certain districts last year considered that they had been unfairly treated when they were prevented from looting as their brothers had done in other areas. Moreover, suitable cultivable land is becoming a problem in some areas, and the Kurds expect to acquire the lands of those Assyrians who emigrate. This would now appear to them impossible.

#### *Iraqis.*

Unquestionably, the refusal of Brazil to accept the Assyrians, even though it may only mean a delay in their date of departure, will cause considerable reactions in certain Iraqi circles, and give rise to considerable propaganda.

I have grave misgivings as to the attitude which will be adopted by the army as a whole.

As regards the civil administration of the liwas in which the Assyrians live, I feel more hopeful.

The administrative hold over this liwa is very definitely stronger and firmer than it has been in the past, and it is only by such policy that trouble can be avoided, always provided that anti-Assyrian propaganda is also firmly suppressed elsewhere.

I believe that the position can only be kept stable by a declaration by His Britannic Majesty's Government, which, if possible, should be made at the same time as the announcement of the failure of the Brazilian negotiations, stating that they will now undertake to deal with the problem and provide homes for those Assyrians who wish to leave Iraq.

It is impossible to anticipate future events with any degree of accuracy, but I am of opinion that only by the acceptance of responsibility by His Britannic Majesty's Government for the settlement of the Assyrians outside Iraq can possible very grave consequences be successfully avoided.

Enclosure 3 in No. 168.

*Copy of D.O. No. 73 of June 10, 1934, from Major Wilson, Mosul, to Sir K. Cornwallis, Adviser, Ministry of the Interior, Bagdad.*

HEREWITH the report on the Assyrian question for which you asked.

#### *General situation.*

Despite much hostile propaganda emanating from Mar Shimun and his satellites and despite a considerable number of foolish acts by junior officials, &c., of the Iraq Government, it has been possible during the last seven months to stabilise the Assyrian situation and prevent serious incidents.

#### *Government Officials.*

After the inspiration they received last summer many Government officials have found it difficult to realise that policy has changed and real benevolence is intended, and it must be admitted that in many cases the behaviour of the Assyrians themselves has not been such as to induce benevolence.

#### *Kurds.*

The Kurds, also, after an orgy of loot and rapine, are surprised at the volte-face in Government policy and remain inclined to tug at the leash like a terrier first loosed at a cat and then suddenly pulled off while its quarry is still in view.

The events of last summer have undoubtedly engendered such bitterness in certain areas that only a strongly declared and enforced Government policy can prevent serious incidents.

#### *Assyrians.*

Owing to the declaration of the League Council that a home for Assyrians must be found outside Iraq, the great majority of Assyrians, especially those who trust blindly in Mar Shimun, have merely been, and still are, awaiting the word "Go!" and have either not cultivated at all or only such an area as they estimated would carry on till their departure.

The exception to this is the Lower Tiari villages of the Nahla and Amadia Qadhas, who have cultivated as usual and been rewarded with excellent crops. Government has done a great deal towards helping sufferers from the troubles by the issue of seed grain, ploughs, oxen, &c. (to such as were prepared to use them), repair of houses (for such as were prepared to live in them), and the issue of food, blankets, cooking utensils and cash assistance to all.

Many false claims for assistance and false allegations of losses have, however, been submitted and have irritated local officials considerably.

It is clear, therefore, that the majority of Assyrians, encouraged, firstly, by the League's promise to find them a new home and then by the negotiations with Brazil, have merely "carried on," expecting to be quickly removed to the promised land.

Comparatively few have listened to the statements of Major Thomson and myself that they should cultivate, as their date of emigration might be long delayed, preferring to harken to the propaganda of Mar Shimun, insisting that cultivation would only lead to their permanent retention in Iraq.

Now a new situation has been produced, one which may have unfortunate repercussions unless handled sanely and with a certain outlay of money.

#### *Conclusions.*

I consider it of the utmost importance that it be made clear to the British Government that any attempted permanent resettlement of Assyrians in Iraq would be fraught with the greatest difficulties, and even were such a settlement possible, there is no guarantee that further troubles, even more serious than those of last year, might not occur.

The happenings of last August have by no means served to enhance British prestige and a repetition would undoubtedly strike a further deadly blow at it.

Now that the Brazil scheme has failed, I cannot believe that the League Council is in a position to find a suitable home for the Assyrians outside Iraq, as the Nansen Committee, who have studied the whole question of emigration for refugees very carefully, stated that Brazil was by far the best country on their books.

The Assyrians, therefore, will now find themselves faced with a blank disappointment, a disappointment which could only be assuaged by an immediate declaration from the British Government that it is determined to take up the question itself and find a home within its boundaries.

Even with such a declaration it is inevitable that the Assyrians will lose faith in the promises made to them, and in those like Major Thomson and myself, who are the medium through whom these promises are transmitted.

It is impossible to appreciate the probable effect of the failure of the Brazil scheme. I do not anticipate any very violent repercussion, but young Assyrian hot-heads might quite well take some foolish action which would once again upset the situation.

Iraqi newspapers should be prevented from writing inflammatory articles, and immediate action should be taken against any who agitate against the Assyrians.

The army is an unknown quantity, but should be capable of being controlled. If funds are forthcoming it may be possible to persuade some of the Assyrians to return and cultivate villages; persuade more persons already in villages to cultivate and to distribute the inhabitants of the Mosul refugee camp amongst already occupied villages.

It must not be overlooked, however, that a very large proportion of the abandoned villages are privately owned, and it has, of course, been impossible to prevent the owners allotting the lands to Kurds, Yezidis and others.



With regard to the projected closing of the camp in Mosul and the billeting of the people therefrom on Assyrian villages, I have already stated that I consider such a step is likely to create serious unrest both amongst the refugees and amongst the villagers who are to receive them. If the refugees refuse to go to the villages, is Government prepared to compel them to do so, and, if so, how?

The mutessarif has submitted a scheme under which it *might* be possible to induce the refugees to go to villages and the villagers to receive them, the money required for this scheme to be deducted from that to be voted for the Assyrian emigration.

I attach herewith a statement of the funds I consider necessary—

- (a) For the closing of the camp and the satisfactory disposal of its inhabitants.
- (b) For the temporary resettlement of Assyrians at present in Mosul town and assistance to others at present not cultivating but resident in villages.

*Enclosure to P.S. No. 73.*

The following are details of amounts estimated to be required:—

- (a) For disposal of all men, women and children in the camp.
- (b) For disposal of all Assyrians, whether in Mosul or in villages, but who have hitherto not cultivated.

The sum provided should keep all these people for a year, after which Government's liability would cease. Feeding for grown-ups is reckoned at I.D. 4 per head and for children at I.D. 2 per head.

Two oxen, a plough, seed and harvesting implements are reckoned at I.D. 7.

<i>Destitutes.</i>		I.D.
Women: 169 × I.D. 4	=	676
Boys: 120 × I.D. 2	=	240
Girls: 105 × I.D. 2	=	210
		1,126

*Men in Camp—Fit for Work and their Families.*

30 men × I.D. 4	=	120
25 women × I.D. 4	=	100
40 × I.D. 2	=	80
		300
Old men: 40 × I.D. 4	=	160
Old women: 35 × I.D. 4	=	140
Boys and girls: 40 × I.D. 2	=	80
		380

*Wives in Camp—Men outside in Mosul.*

58 women at I.D. 4	=	232
50 boys × I.D. 2	=	100
55 girls × I.D. 2	=	110
50 men × I.D. 4	=	200
		642

*Wives in Camp—Men elsewhere in Iraq.*

23 women × I.D. 4	=	92
18 boys × I.D. 2	=	36
21 girls × I.D. 2	=	42
		170

*Families in Mosul, &c.*

300 men × I.D. 4	=	1,200
300 women × I.D. 4	=	1,200
800 children × I.D. 2	=	1,600
		4,000

	I.D.
<i>Ploughs, Oxen, Seed, &amp;c., for People who have left Villages and whose Wives are in Camp or elsewhere.</i>	
450 families × I.D. 7	= 3,150
	3,150
<i>Families in Bagdad Camp, &amp;c.</i>	
1	

*Further Assistance for People in Villages who are not yet Self-supporting.*

100 families × I.D. 7	=	700
Cost of transport to villages for camp personnel	=	300
For others	=	150
Houses, say, 500 houses at I.D. 1½	=	750
Total		11,868

*Enclosure 4 in No. 168.*

*Translation of the Confidential Letter from the Mutessarif, Mosul, No. C/151, dated June 8, 1934, to the Ministry of Interior.*

*Assyrians.*

YOUR memorandum M.K. 749 of the 9th May, 1934.

1. The Assyrians who are now at the camp in Mosul, and who number, according to the latest statistics, 1439, are classified as follows:—

Category—	Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.	Total
1. Those who have men and sons in Mosul and other towns in Iraq	..	64	70	69	223
2. Whose men and relatives are in Syria	..	255	178	178	611
3. Without men and relatives	..	169	120	105	394
4. Living with their husbands in the camp numbering fifty-nine families	69	59	52	31	211
Total	69	567	420	383	1,439

Taking the conditions of living in the villages into consideration, we may estimate the cost of living for an adult person during one year at I.D. 4/370, while 2 dinars will be sufficient for a male or female child as under:—

Commodity.	Quantity. Qazna.	Price. I.D. Fils.
Wheat	15	1 500
Goat	3	1 000
Adas	3	200
Dukhn (millet)	4	120
Simsn	1	100
Barley	5	250
Ghee, meat or other requirements		1 200
Total		4 370

If we add to this amount what can be earned by each individual, whether male or female, from collecting gall-nuts and ballut, and from spinning and



similar simple works usually done by the people of the mountains, and considering the possibility of two or more persons living together, it will be seen that these allowances are not small.

The amount required by one family for the purpose of cultivation is estimated at I.D. 7, as the following details will show:—

Commodity.	Price in Dinars.
2 oxen ... ..	4
Ploughs ... ..	1
Different kinds of seed ... ..	2
Total ... ..	7

We consider that families who have husbands and sons in Mosul or other towns in Iraq, and whose number in the camp is 223 (category 1), should not be included in the scheme of accommodation and maintenance, and we believe that it is possible to force these families to join their husbands and sons, who undoubtedly are doing some work and can maintain their families, as it is their duty to do so. But if the Government wishes to provide for the maintenance of these families even in the event of their joining their husbands, which we do not expect, then the necessary expenses for one year would be:—

	I.D.
84 women $\times$ 4/370 ... ..	367/080
139 children $\times$ 2/000 ... ..	278/000
Total ... ..	645/080

If we leave out the families whose men are still in Syria, regarding which it has been primarily decided to send to Syria, we shall have categories 3 and 4.

It is possible to distribute the families who have no men or relatives (category 3) amongst the Assyrian villages for the purpose of living there. The maintenance expenses of these families for one year amounts to—

	I.D.
169 women $\times$ 4/370 ... ..	738/530
225 children $\times$ 2/000 ... ..	450/000
Total ... ..	1,188/530

Category 4, *i.e.*, families living with their husbands in the camp, numbering 211 and consisting of fifty-nine families, require both means of living and cultivation in the event of their distribution amongst the villages. These expenses for one year amount to—

	I.D.
128 men and women $\times$ 4/370 ... ..	559/360
83 children $\times$ 2/000 ... ..	166/000
59 families $\times$ 7/000 ... ..	413/000
Total ... ..	1,138/360

We have to add the transport expenses to the expenses of categories 1, 3 and 4, and, after taking the number of Assyrians who can be distributed amongst the qadhas into consideration, and considering the hire of a 3-ton lorry, which will be sufficient to carry thirty persons, the transport expenses shall be I.D. 127/500, as under:—

	I.D.
25 lorries $\times$ 3/500 : 87/500 for Aqra, Dohuk and Shaikhan Qadhas.	
8 lorries $\times$ 5/000 : 40/000 for Amadia Qadha.	

Total 127/500

On the above basis, therefore, the total expenses necessary for the maintenance of categories 1 and 3 and the maintenance and distribution of category 4 and transport expenses are summarised as follows:—

	I.D.
Maintenance of category 1 ... ..	645/080
Maintenance of category 3 ... ..	1,188/530
Distribution and maintenance of category 4 ... ..	1,138/360
Transport expenses ... ..	127/500
	<hr/>
	3,099/470

As to the problem of their distribution amongst the Assyrian villages, we understand from the kaimakams of the respective qadhas that it is possible approximately to distribute 550 persons in Amadia, 685 in Dohuk, 218 in Aqra and 175 in Shaikhan, on condition that the last number should be without men, so that they may be distributed amongst the families living in the villages, due to the lack of empty houses for them in the Qadha of Shaikhan.

It is clear from the above statement that it is easy to distribute the Assyrians under categories 3 and 4, whose total is 605, amongst the villages. At the time of their distribution we will take into consideration the harmony between the parties of those distributed and of the villages to which they are sent as much as possible.

If the allowances of their maintenance is distributed to them in cash at once, then it is extremely possible that after a short time they claim that it is finished and that they have nothing to live with, so we suggest that we take from them guarantees stating that they have received the sum and are contented with it or that these allowances should be spent for them under the knowledge of the local authorities.

2. It is possible to employ the 300 Assyrians who are now in Mosul, outside the camp—in those projects which the Department of Works intends to complete during the year, for the whole seasons of summer and autumn. Examples of these projects are the roads of Amadia and Rawanduz and Altun Kupri-Arbil, and the construction of the new hospital and other works. It is also possible to employ some of them in the works of the municipality when this starts improving the roads and paving them, soon after its budget being approved of. In addition to this, some of these Assyrians can work in harvesting, and we shall encourage them after preparing the way for them to work.

3. In addition to the number of Assyrians in the villages of Dohuk Qadha who shall not be able after a short time to maintain their living, due to their refusal of cultivation either from their laziness or due to the influence of the propaganda of Mar Shimun upon them, or because they have cultivated a very small amount in spite of the large amounts of grain given to them, there are others in similar conditions in Amadia Qadha. The number of those who are going to be unable to sustain themselves in the villages in the near future can be estimated as follows:—

Dohuk Qadha : 150.

Shaikhan Qadha : 150 (30 men included).

Amadia Qadha : 155 (120 men and women from the Almonians and 35 women).

The only way for maintaining these people is to force the men and the young of them to work in the projects of the Public Works Department, especially in the road of Amadia and the Serai of Dohuk—if it is agreed to build this serai during this year—and in other works. The Government should at the same time warn them that they will not be responsible for the maintenance of those families whose men refuse to work.

This is in case the Government do not intend to reincur any amount on them to insure their carrying on agricultural work and giving certain means of livelihood. If the Ministry wishes we may give an estimate of these expenditures.

We do not see any other way than what is mentioned above for treating the problem of these Assyrians, since it is impossible to get the landlords in the large villages to agree to employ them in agricultural works. At the same time, the Assyrians themselves will undoubtedly refuse to work there, due to their arrogance.



As to the rest of the Assyrians, their products are sufficient to keep them for one year.

4. The required statistics about the harvest of this season are not yet complete and we are going to forward them in the near future. But the number of those whose products are not sufficient to maintain them is included in the numbers mentioned in the item above.

5. The plan which we suggest to follow in order to get the Assyrians work and to maintain those who do not own anything could be summarised as follows:—

- (a) The distribution of those who are now in the camp, as was shown before.
- (b) Asking the Department of Public Works to start with its projects without delay, especially the building of the new hospital and the finishing of the Amadia road and repairing the roads in Zakho, Dohuk and Shaikhan and Aqra Qadhas to the last extent as the budget may allow.
- (c) Approving the construction of Dohuk Serai this year.
- (d) Extending the sphere of employment in Mosul by lending the municipality a loan of 6,000 dinars, as we asked in our letter 5442 on the 13th May, 1934, and ending the question of the payment of the prices of the rest-house to the municipality, so that it may be able to start repairing and constructing the roads, opening a chance for employment.
- (e) Forcing the Assyrians to work and holding a special record in order to know those who refuse to work, so that they may not remain a burden on the Government.

According to what we know about the psychology of the Assyrians, we think that those Assyrians who are in the camp are not going to agree to leave the easy life there if the matter is left to their choice, and that they will try to create obstacles to the Government in order to remain in the camp; accordingly, we are obliged to compel them, if encouragement proves useless and in case it is decided to distribute them.

Anyhow, it is necessary to give an end to this problem.

If we notice the allowances made for the maintenance of the Assyrians when we distribute them amongst the villages, as is explained in item 1 of this report, and if we observe the inevitable expenses for the maintenance of even a small number of those Assyrians who are not capable of maintaining themselves in the villages even when most of them are given work, we see that the amount of L.D. 3,000 which is going to remain with us from the allowances for six months after paying half of it to the Syrian Government in connexion with the families which will be sent to them from the camp will be insufficient.

It should be noted that a sum of L.D. 2,198 has been spent up to the end of May from this amount.

[E 4181/1/93]

No. 169.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received June 26.)*

(No. 345.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, June 20, 1934.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 332 of the 14th June, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a letter addressed to me by Sir Kinahan Cornwallis, dated the 18th June, enclosing copy of a communication which he has made to his Minister on the Assyrian situation. You will observe that Sir Kinahan advises—

- (a) The break up of the Mosul refugee camp on the lines proposed by the Mutessarif of Mosul (see last enclosure to my despatch under reference).
- (b) The strongest pressure on the Syrian Government to take the dependants of the Assyrian internees in Syria.
- (c) The resettlement on the land of all Assyrians who may be willing.

2. I do not yet feel competent to express an opinion on points (a) and (c) as there are so many uncertain factors, such as the inscrutable temper and attitude of the Assyrians, the effect of the inevitably increasing propaganda of the Mar Shimun, the incidence of distress, the question of the goodwill, the integrity and the reliability of the Iraqi officials who will handle the Assyrians. I therefore propose to fly to Mosul on the 22nd June to discuss these matters with the local experts.

3. Nevertheless, as you are already aware, I do feel strongly on point (b) which I consider should be carried out first. I hope that by the time you receive this despatch I shall be in a position to supplement my telegram No. 10, Saving, of the 18th June, by reporting that the Iraqi Government are prepared to make a proposal which will provide the test as to whether the French will be helpful or whether they exult in the embarrassment of Iraq and indirectly of His Majesty's Government in this Assyrian problem.

I have, &c.

G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

Enclosure 1 in No. 169.

*Sir K. Cornwallis to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes.*

*Ministry of the Interior,*

*Iraq, Bagdad, June 18, 1934.*

Dear Ogilvie-Forbes,

I FORWARD for your information a note, dated the 18th June, which I have written to my Minister on the Assyrian situation.

Before advocating settlement, I obtained an assurance from Wilson that it is possible. It now appears that though some land has been allotted to Kurds, enough still remains for the Assyrians.

A translation of the memorandum of the 8th June from the Mutessarif, Mosul, to which reference is made, was forwarded to you under cover of my letter of the 13th instant.

Yours sincerely,

K. CORNWALLIS.

Enclosure 2 in No. 169.

*Sir K. Cornwallis to the Minister of the Interior, Bagdad.*

(Reference: Memorandum from Mutessarif, Mosul, dated June 8, 1934—Assyrians.)

THE failure of the League to find a home for the Assyrians in Brazil puts us back to where we were last autumn. It faces us with the probability that at least one year—and possibly several years—will elapse before a solution is found, and that the situation will increase in difficulty as time goes on unless a constructive policy is adopted.

2. Expenditure during the last ten months has been partly productive (re-establishing Assyrians on the land), but mainly non-productive (the Mosul camp). The policy of the Government has been one of tiding over until the League found a solution.

3. The Government now feels—and in my opinion rightly—that it cannot go on indefinitely in this manner. Opinion in the country is against it and it leads nowhere.

4. I have heard it advocated that the camp should be closed and the Assyrians as a whole left to fend for themselves, regardless of consequences. I cannot believe that the Government would agree to such a policy which would inevitably lead to great suffering amongst the Assyrians and bring discredit on the reputation of Iraq.

5. In framing its policy, the Government should, in my opinion, take a long view and act on the supposition that the Assyrians may remain in Iraq for several years. It should take constructive steps, having as their aim not only



Assyrian relief, but the relief of the exchequer from an indefinite and burdensome liability. The basis of such a policy should be to get as many Assyrians as possible back upon the land.

6. The Government has given an assurance to the League that when the time comes, it will contribute to the emigration of the Assyrians to the best of its financial ability. In view of the delay which has occurred, and which is likely to be prolonged, I suggest that the Government might fairly charge against this sum any expenditure that may be incurred after the budgetary provision of 6,000 dinars has been exhausted.

7. The proposals which I advocate—they are none of them new—are—

- (a) The break up of the Mosul camp on the lines proposed by the mutessarif.
- (b) The strongest pressure on the Syrian Government to take the relatives of Assyrians in Syria.
- (c) The re-establishment on the land of all Assyrians who will agree to go.

With regard to (a), I suggest as a preliminary that the League committee should be requested by telegram to issue another message to the Assyrians, explaining that the Brazil scheme has fallen through, that *at least a year must elapse before any emigration can take place*, and that it is imperative that all should turn to work and cultivation.

I am opposed to the dispersal of the camp before such an announcement is made. It must be remembered that the Assyrians have been expecting for a long time to leave the country at any moment, and that their disappointment must be intense. Their dispersal amongst the villages will at the least be a very delicate matter to handle. Without an announcement from the League, I foresee passive resistance in its worst form. The Government can, of course, issue an ultimatum, but can it afford to enforce it?

(b) Every effort should be made to send the families to Syria without delay. If they do not leave the camp first, the dispersal of the rest amongst the villages will be a far more difficult task, and may even become impracticable.

(c) See below.

8. As regards the recommendations of the mutessarif, my comments are as follows:—

#### Category 1.

Of these, 175 women and children are the families of fifty men living in Mosul; the rest are related to men living elsewhere in Iraq.

Major Wilson assures me that these families are being kept in the camp because it has been ascertained in each case that their men are out of work and unable to support them. It seems, therefore, that they must be helped.

#### Categories 3 and 4.

I agree with the mutessarif, but point out that he has made no provision for housing.

#### Paragraphs 2, 3 and 4.

I am afraid that the mutessarif is optimistic about the possibility of employing so large a number of Assyrians on public works.

I am informed that the plans of the Mosul hospital are not yet finished; there is no intention of building the Dohuk serai this year; the chances of the municipality obtaining a loan appear remote; with the exception of the Amadia road, the road repair provision for the Liwa is negligible.

One hundred and fifty men will be employed for a time on the Amadia road, but this is not permanent employment, nor is it very suitable for the Assyrians in Mosul, who would have to leave their families unprotected there.

It therefore appears that the proposals of the mutessarif will not even meet the immediate situation. In any case, such employment is only a temporary palliative, and does not take into consideration the probability that the Assyrians may remain in Iraq for several years.

9. I therefore return to my contention that the Government will save itself much trouble now and be put to no greater expenditure in the long run if it endeavours to settle the Assyrians on the land. In spite of what the mutessarif

writes, there is some reason to believe that many will be only too glad to accept. Several have, in fact already sounded Major Wilson and Major Thomson.

10. Major Wilson has made the following rough estimate of what the scheme might cost:—

	Dinars.
Food for families now in Mosul—	
300 men at I.D. 4	= 1,200
300 women at I.D. 4	= 1,200
800 children at I.D. 2	= 1,600
	4,000
Ploughs, oxen, seed, &c. for people who have left villages and whose wives are in camp and elsewhere. Outside figure, 450 families at I.D. 7	= 3,150
Further assistance for people in villages who are not yet self-supporting—	
100 families at I.D. 7	= 700
Cost of transport to villages, say	= 200
Houses, say, 500 at I.D. 1½	= 750
Total	8,800

11. I fully realise that these are somewhat startling figures, and I mention them not as a definite proposal, but as an indication of the possible cost in the unlikely event of every Assyrian wishing to return to the country.

The important point at the moment is whether the Government will agree to the principle of reinstating on the land those Assyrians who can be persuaded to go. If it will agree, the mutessarif can be instructed to submit a scheme and an estimate of the probable cost.

12. In conclusion, I would point out, on the one hand, that, though the mutessarif's scheme disposes of the inmates of the Mosul camp, it does not adequately provide for the larger number of Assyrians who cannot support themselves and their families; that the situation of the latter is bound to deteriorate, until in the end the Government will have to come to the rescue; that during this period of deterioration Government will be faced with an increasingly difficult and troublesome task; and on the other hand, that settlement will relieve distress; it carries on the practice of last winter, and is in accordance with Iraq's declared policy to the League; it will not cost the Government anything in the long run; it will free the Government of responsibility of maintaining the Assyrians in the future.

K. CORNWALLIS.

June 18, 1934.



## CHAPTER III.—SYRIA, PALESTINE AND GENERAL.

[E 7984/5767/65]

No. 170.

*Sir John Simon to Mr. Morgan (Angora).*

(No. 4.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, January 2, 1934.*

THE Turkish Ambassador called on Sir Robert Vansittart on the 28th December, and explained that the project for a non-aggression pact between Turkey, Persia, Iraq, the Soviet Union and Afghanistan, to which it was proposed that this country should also be a party, had recently been revived. Munir Bey did not commit himself as to what Power had taken the initiative in reviving this project, but mentioned that it had originally been suggested in connexion with relations between Persia and Iraq.

2. The Turkish Government were inclined to view such a project with favour, as they considered that it would consolidate peaceful international relations in the Middle East, and operate as a further influence in the direction of world peace. It was important for the success of the scheme, however, that this country should be a party to it, and the Turkish Government, before committing themselves further in the matter, were therefore anxious to ascertain the attitude of His Majesty's Government towards the scheme.

3. Sir Robert Vansittart replied that, although he had already heard of this project, the suggestions had hitherto been of too vague and general a nature for the matter to be submitted to me as a definite proposal. He was unable, therefore, to say what view I should take of it, or what would be the considered attitude of His Majesty's Government. On the other hand, his first personal reaction was that there was already a sufficient number of pacts of this nature in existence to render the conclusion of yet another pact somewhat superfluous. Relations between this country and Turkey were so satisfactory that they needed no further safeguards. The countries which had been mentioned were for the most part either members of the League of Nations, and therefore protected by the Covenant, or signatories of the Kellogg Pact, to which the proposed new pact could add but little. He promised, however, to submit the Turkish Government's enquiry to me immediately on my return, and to let the Ambassador know the views of His Majesty's Government on this suggestion in due course.

4. Copies of this despatch are being sent to His Majesty's representatives at Tehran, Bagdad, Moscow and Kabul.

I am, &amp;c.

JOHN SIMON.

[E 202/202/89]

No. 171.

*Consul Mackereth to Sir John Simon.—(Received January 8, 1934.)*

(No. 62. Confidential.)

Sir,

*Damascus, December 8, 1933.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 56 of the 20th November, 1933, and my telegram No. 14, relative to the Franco-Syrian Treaty of Alliance, I have the honour to report that the prorogation of Parliament pronounced on the 21st November by the High Commissioner, finding his authority in that all-comprehensive article 116 of the Syrian Constitution, was extended on the 24th November to cover the remainder of the session ending the 31st December. Presumably, therefore, the Chamber will next meet on the 20th March, 1934, after the normal winter recess.

2. At the sitting of the 21st November the French delegate, M. Veber, intervened with the High Commissioner's "Arrêté de Suspension." He did so after the members had passed a resolution that the house should proceed to the immediate and detailed discussion of the treaty. This was proposed by the Député Zeki Bey El Khatib, who, it will be recalled, had been arrested as a *coup*,

but not apparently thereby intimidated, on the 4th November in connexion with the anti-Zionist demonstrations (my despatch No. 53 of the 9th November, 1933). There was an excited scene when M. Veber tried to read the High Commissioner's proclamation. He was shouted down by Jamil Bey Mardam Bey, who, anticipating the nature of M. Veber's intervention, announced that he had a list of signatures of the majority of the Députés testifying that they were already prepared to vote against the treaty, whose merits had been previously disclosed to them.

3. It appears obvious from the High Commissioner's action that his object was to prevent a formal rejection of the treaty by the Parliament. This seems to me to demolish the widely accepted hypothesis that the French were only with extreme reluctance brought to the point of granting a treaty in imitation of our action in Iraq. It is, I understand, the French officials' hope that, between now and March next, the wayward sheep from the French flock in the Parliament may be induced to return to the fold and then there will be a majority to vote in favour of ratification of the treaty as it stands.

4. Camouflage having been put on with less than the usual French artistry, it is not difficult to find reasons in the treaty itself for the French desire to saddle it upon the country in its present form; nor, for the same reasons, to understand the Syrians' dislike of it.

5. Perhaps it is not without self-interest that the French Government appears anxious to see the stamp of legality put by the Syrians' elected representatives on a document that keeps Syria as a very exclusive French preserve. The apparent vagueness of the military clauses (article 5) finds its definition in the reality of the recently completed imposing fortifications that the French army has erected on the heights west of Damascus and which can but have as their object the domination of the city and, incidentally, the minds of the people and the Members of Parliament. By article 6, France has assured for herself a number adequate for her purposes of French advisers and magistrates and by article 3 of Protocole "B" she keeps tight hold of the purse-strings. Substance is thus given to the belief that the aim of France has from the beginning been not only to safeguard her foothold on the coast, where the population is more tractable, but also to retard the growth of an Arab State or confederation in the hinterland by a system of controlled strangulation.

6. There are not wanting pointers to confirm the supposition that the ultimate objective of French policy is towards eventual expansion eastwards, when circumstances are more favourable than they are to-day; perhaps it is only another dream of "La France orientale." Should it ever be realised, the immanent threat to our communications may turn out more menacing than Kaiser Wilhelm's vision of a Bagdad railway. In view of our already lightened hold on Iraq, any success that the Syrian Nationalists achieve by their manœuvres towards a greater and more real independence from French sway may not turn out to be entirely to our disadvantage.

7. I am sending copies of this despatch to Aleppo, Amman, Bagdad, Beirut, Cairo, Jedda and Jerusalem.

I have, &amp;c.

GILBERT MACKERETH.

[E 400/400/65]

No. 172.

*Sir John Simon to Mehmet Munir Bey.*

Your Excellency,

*Foreign Office, January 20, 1934.*

WHEN your Excellency called here on the 27th December you informed Sir Robert Vansittart that the project for a non-aggression pact between Turkey, Persia, Iraq, the Soviet Union and Afghanistan, to which it was proposed that the United Kingdom should be a party, had recently been revived. You added that the Turkish Government were inclined to view the project with favour, but considered it important for the success of the pact that the United Kingdom should be a party thereto. Before committing themselves further in the matter, therefore, the Turkish Government were anxious to ascertain the attitude of His Majesty's Government towards the scheme.

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2 c 2



2. Sir Robert Vansittart then informed you that, although he had already heard of this project, the suggestions had hitherto been of too vague and general a nature for the matter to be submitted to me as a definite proposal. He was therefore unable to say what view I should take of it, or what would be the considered attitude towards it of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. On the other hand, Sir Robert Vansittart's first personal reaction was that there already existed a sufficient number of pacts of this nature to render the conclusion of yet another pact somewhat superfluous. Relations between the United Kingdom and Turkey were so satisfactory that they required no further safeguards. The countries which had been mentioned as possible parties to the pact were either members of the League of Nations, and therefore protected by the Covenant, or signatories of the Kellogg Pact, to which the proposed new pact could add but little. He promised, however, to submit the Turkish Government's enquiry to me immediately on my return from abroad and that the views of His Majesty's Government on the suggestion would be communicated to you in due course.

3. I have the honour to inform your Excellency that, having now given careful consideration to the enquiry which you made on behalf of the Turkish Government, I can only confirm officially the views provisionally expressed to you by Sir Robert Vansittart on the 27th December, as representing the attitude of His Majesty's Government towards the proposed pact. I shall be grateful if you will be so good as to inform the Turkish Government accordingly.

I have, &c.

JOHN SIMON.

[E 534/534/31]

No. 173.

*Papers communicated by the Colonial Office, January 22, 1934.*

(1)

*Sir P. Cunliffe-Lister to Lieutenant-General Sir A. Wauchope.*

(Confidential.)

Sir,

*Colonial Office, December 8, 1933.*

WITH reference to my confidential despatch of the 9th August, regarding the £2 million loan, I have the honour to inform you that His Majesty's Government have decided that they are justified in imposing, as a condition of their proposed guarantee of this loan, a stipulation that imported plant and materials purchased out of the loan should be as far as possible of British manufacture.

2. His Majesty's Government are advised that the imposition of such a condition cannot be regarded as contrary to the provisions of article 18 of the Palestine mandate if it is in the interests of Palestine to accept the guarantee subject to the stipulation proposed, provided that the condition (as to British materials and plant) is made one of the express terms upon which the guarantee is granted, and it is made clear that it is entirely for the Palestine Government to decide whether it desires to accept a loan on these terms.

3. His Majesty's Government see no reason to doubt that, in view of the financial advantages which the guarantee may be expected to confer on the Government of Palestine, it is in the interests of Palestine that the guarantee should be accepted under the proposed condition, and they accordingly propose to include in the Bill authorising the guarantee, which will shortly be presented to Parliament, a clause based on that quoted in paragraph 2 (b) of the circular despatch of the 11th July, 1930, of which a copy was enclosed in my miscellaneous despatch of the 26th September, 1930.

4. I shall be glad to be informed at an early date whether the Government of Palestine wish to accept the guarantee, subject to the proposed condition with regard to the purchase of imported plant and materials.

I have, &c.

P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER.

(2)

*Lieutenant-General Sir A. Wauchope to Sir P. Cunliffe-Lister.*

(Confidential.)

Sir,

*Palestine, December 23, 1933.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your confidential despatch of the 8th December, regarding the new Palestine Government Guaranteed Loan of £P. 2 million, and to inform you that the Government of Palestine is willing to accept the guarantee of His Majesty's Government for this loan on the condition that imported plant and materials purchased out of the loan should be so far as possible of British manufacture.

I have, &c.

A. G. WAUCHOPE,

*High Commissioner for Palestine.*

(3)

*Telegram from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the High Commissioner for Palestine.*

(Sent 7 P.M., January 15, 1934.)

(Confidential.)

YOUR despatch of the 23rd December, Confidential B.

Crown Agents for Colonies have been requested to stipulate for United Kingdom manufacture or origin in case of any orders for plant and machinery or materials chargeable to funds of Palestine in anticipation of issue of guaranteed loan. All indents for plant and machinery or materials for loan works should be endorsed accordingly. Crown Agents have been instructed to refer to the Secretary of State in any case in which they consider condition as to United Kingdom manufacture or origin to be against interests of Palestine. Similar conditions as regards imported plant and machinery or materials should be inserted in any local contracts in connexion with loan works.

Despatch follows with copy of clause which it is proposed to include in Guaranteed Loan Bill.

(4)

*Colonial Office to the Crown Agents for the Colonies.*

Gentlemen,

*January 16, 1934.*

WITH reference to the letter from this Department of the 1st November, I am directed to transmit to you, for your information, copies of correspondence<sup>(1)</sup> with the High Commissioner for Palestine on the subject of the decision that imported plant and machinery or materials purchased out of the forthcoming Palestine loan of £2 million should be, so far as possible, of United Kingdom manufacture or origin.

2. This decision will apply to plant, machinery and materials purchased out of the surplus balances of Palestine in anticipation of the issue of the loan, and I am accordingly to request that, in issuing invitations to tender for such plant, machinery and materials, you will insert the condition as to United Kingdom manufacture or origin, unless in any particular case you consider that this would not be in the interests of Palestine. I am to request you to refer to this Department for instructions in any such case.

I am, &c.

O. O. R. WILLIAMS.

<sup>(1)</sup> Papers (1), (2) and (3).



[E 526/526/89]

No. 174.

*Consul-General Sir H. Satow to Sir John Simon.—(Received January 23.)*

(No. 1.)

Sir,

Beirut, January 5, 1934.

I HAVE the honour to report that an end was put to the doubts and rumours regarding the future form of government of the Lebanon which have for some time prevailed by the issue on the 2nd January of four decrees dealing with the matter. It will be noticed that the arrangements made are described as provisional, and they are, indeed, in the nature of an experiment which will give M. de Martel a year's time in which, with a better knowledge of conditions and persons than he now possesses, to make up his mind as to the final form of government best suited to the country.

2. Of the decrees mentioned, No. 1, of which a copy<sup>(1)</sup> is enclosed, is a fairly lengthy document of 49 articles, which lays down the form of government. The chief of the Executive will bear the title of President of the Lebanese Republic. He will be assisted by a Secretary of State, who will be responsible to him alone, and in certain defined cases by a council consisting of the directors of departments (Finance, &c.) and the two highest magistrates. There will be also a Chamber of Deputies of twenty-five persons, of whom eighteen will be elected and seven nominated by presidential decree. The latter have to be chosen from certain special categories of persons. The relations between the Executive and the Legislative are defined in the decree, which also deals with the internal procedure of the Chamber and its powers. The President can adjourn it within certain limits and can dissolve it. He has powers to enable him to get through the budget even if the Chamber is refractory. His salary will be £15,000 Syrian, while each Deputy will receive £900 Syrian, except the three for Beirut, who receive £600 Syrian.

3. Decree No. 2 contains the new Electoral Law. It is a lengthy document and up to date the newspapers have only published its text up to article 62. A copy will be forwarded when it is printed in the *Official Gazette*. As there is to be one Deputy per 50,000 inhabitants, and as there are to be eighteen Deputies, it must be assumed that the population of the Lebanon is 900,000. This comes rather as a surprise, as it has always been supposed to be about 600,000. The electoral area is the administrative district, of which there are five, viz., Beirut, North Lebanon, Mount Lebanon, South Lebanon and the Bekaa. The system of elections in two degrees has been abandoned. In its place there will be universal direct suffrage. Seats are still to be allotted on a confessional basis. A decree of the acting head of the Government has fixed the division of seats as follows: Maronites 5, Sunni Moslems 4, Shiah Moslems 3, Greek Orthodox 2, Armenians, Greek Catholics and Druses 1 each, and minorities 1, in the Beirut area. The elections are to be held on the 21st and 22nd January, the second ballot, if necessary, to take place on the 27th and 28th January. The system of election in two degrees was inherited from the Turks. It was cumbersome and led to many abuses. Possibly, under a simpler system, there will be less buying and selling of votes.

4. Decree No. 3 appoints Habib Pasha Es Saad to be President of the Republic for one year, in place of M. Charles Debbas, who, after a long period of office, has at last retired. The appointment will take effect from the day the Chamber has elected its permanent officials. Details regarding Habib Pasha, who is a Maronite, were given in my despatch No. 30 of the 3rd March, 1930. He is an elderly man, with an old-fashioned outlook. He was, before the war, the president of the Lebanese Administration Council, and he seems likely to end his public life as President of the Republic. His appointment is thus in the nature of the bestowal of an honour. Also, in view of his age, he is likely to keep quiet and to refrain from embarrassing the mandatory Power.

5. The last decree, No. 4, appoints M. Privat Aubouard to take temporary charge of the Administration during the electoral period and until such time as Habib Pasha assumes office. M. Aubouard is an officer of the French Colonial Service, who has the rank of Governor. He has been here a long time and has held many posts. Among others, he was Governor of the Alaouites, delegate at

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

Damascus in 1925, at the time of the rising, and Governor of the Lebanon. His last post was that of High Commissioner's delegate to the Lebanese Government.

6. The new arrangements should be considerably less costly than those which preceded them, but even so it may be doubted whether the taxpayer will get real value for his money. However, parliamentary institutions of an elaborate kind having been unwisely introduced by M. de Jouvenel, it is obviously impossible to abolish them entirely, all the more so as before the war the Lebanon had its Administrative Council.

7. Habib Pasha is very well known and his appointment seems on the whole to be popular, though the local politicians, naturally, do not welcome the new arrangements. He has, since it became known, spent his days in receiving callers from all over the Lebanon. Although he is a Maronite and is supposed to enjoy the support of the Maronite Patriarch, the Moslems do not seem displeased. They are now concentrating their efforts on obtaining for their community the appointment of Secretary of State. A judge named Sami Bey El Solh, a relative of Riad-el-Solh, the Nationalist, is mentioned as likely to receive the appointment.

I have, &amp;c.

H. E. SATOW.

[E 1018/202/89]

No. 175.

*Acting Consul-General Harvard to Sir John Simon.—(Received February 14.)*

(No. 17.)

Sir,

Beirut, February 5, 1934.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that Comte de Martel, French High Commissioner in Syria and the Lebanon, left Beirut for Paris on the evening of the 3rd February, by steamship *Sphinx* of the Messageries Maritimes. The High Commissioner intends to be absent for approximately one month, and is replaced during his absence by M. Lagarde, the Secretary-General.

2. The completion of the elections in the Lebanon, the opening of Parliament and the institution of the new Government at Beirut have allowed M. de Martel a breathing space during which he can take stock of the situation and render an oral account thereof to his Government in Paris. It would appear to be the economic rather than the political situation which is now to engage his attention, for, on the morning of the day of his departure, he summoned the representatives of the press to meet him and gave them an outline of the measures of an economic nature which he intended to pursue.

3. In the statement which he made to the press representatives he said that, in the few months during which he had been here, he had realised that the population were evidently more interested in the development of the resources of the country and of its commerce and transit trade than in sterile political speculations. Economic development required measures of an administrative order as well as the execution of public works of interest to the community. Different measures of an administrative order had recently been taken; some of these measures were intended to rectify the harmful effects of disordered competition between road and rail, and others would facilitate commerce with neighbouring States by means of the development of trans-desert traffic, and the recent inauguration of the free zone in the port of Beirut indicated that they were beginning to bear fruit. In the domain of Public Works the High Commissioner said that he had drawn up a national programme, after having consulted all those who, he thought, could give him counsel. This task had been made easier for him by the investigations carried out by his predecessors and by the prudence with which the funds of the State had been administered. He paid a tribute to the fact that expenses had always been kept within the limits of revenue, and the High Commission, by its insistence on this point, had rendered a signal service to the country. This prudent administration of the past would now permit the employment of funds for productive purposes and the extinction of the old Ottoman debt would increase the amount which could be earmarked for necessary works of public utility. These works will be spread over a number of years, agricultural production will be developed by irrigation, and economic



development will be activated by extending the means of communication, of transit, ports, railways and roads. The actual details of the programme had yet to be worked out and co-ordinated, so that economic activity in all branches might go smoothly ahead, but he assured his audience that he could now officially proclaim that they had at last started on the road to reality. He stated that, first and foremost, came the question of safeguarding the transit trade, and, for this, measures had already been taken for the prolongation of the railway serving North Syria. South Syria was, however, not being forgotten, and he assured his audience that his plans included the extension of the harbour at Beirut and better means of communication between Damascus and Bagdad. He ended his address by appealing to the press to educate popular opinion on the needs of the country, adding that, if help were forthcoming from all quarters, success would be assured.

Copies of this despatch are being sent to the High Commissioner at Jerusalem, His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad and His Majesty's consul at Damascus.

I have, &c.  
G. T. HAVARD.

[E 756/105/65]

No. 176.

*Foreign Office to Secretary-General, League of Nations (Geneva).*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, February 15, 1934.*

I AM directed by His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to invite a reference to p. 6 of the minutes of the Seventy-sixth Session of the Council (League Document No. C/Seventy-sixth Session/P.V. 3 (1)), from which His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom observe that the report of the representative of Czechoslovakia on the work of the Permanent Mandates Commission during its twenty-third session, which was adopted by the Council, contained the following passage:—

"The commission's observations on the administration of Palestine contains a reminder of the promise given at the meeting of the Council on the 30th January, 1932, by the representatives of France and the United Kingdom regarding the western section of the frontier between Syria and Palestine. The two mandatory Powers concerned will, I feel sure, communicate for approval at the earliest possible date the agreement relating to that section of the frontier."

2. His Majesty's Government presume that the promise which M. Osusky had in mind is that recorded on p. 6 of the minutes of the Sixty-sixth Session of the Council (League Document No. C/Sixty-sixth Session/P.V. 7 (1)). The United Kingdom representative then stated that he had just been informed that the formal approval of the Council had never been sought for the western section of the frontier, dividing Syria and the Lebanon from Palestine, which was delimited in 1923. Viscount Cecil added that His Majesty's Government would lose no time in examining this question in consultation with the French Government, and, if any necessary measures had been overlooked, the appropriate action would be taken, in agreement with the French Government, to remedy the omission at a future session of the Council. The president, who was the French representative, associated himself with the statement made by the United Kingdom representative.

3. In accordance with this promise, the question was immediately examined by the French Government and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, who reached the conclusion that no necessary measures on their part had, in fact, been overlooked. No steps were therefore taken again to bring the matter before the Council.

4. Nevertheless, in view of the fact that the matter has been raised both in the Mandates Commission and in the report of the *rapporteur*, which was adopted by the Council, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, in deference to the wishes of the Council, but without prejudice to their views on

the somewhat difficult legal question involved, are glad in this case to take the formal step of communicating a copy of the agreement concluded on the 7th March, 1923, between the French Government and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom for the approval of the Council.

I am, &c.

G. W. RENDEL.

[E 1218/6/65]

No. 177.

*Consul Mackereth to Sir John Simon.—(Received February 23.)*

(No. 14.)

Sir,

*Damascus, February 16, 1934.*

THE question of the transdesert route to Bagdad continues to engage the attention of the Syrian Government and the mandatory authorities. The publication of a new "arrêté" on the 2nd February, 1934 (my despatch No. 5 O.T. of the 8th February, 1934, addressed to the Department of Overseas Trade), was obviously designed to support and encourage the eastern transit traffic taking the Damascus route from the Mediterranean ports, and indicates quite clearly that the local authorities are not remaining indifferent to the building of a competing road via Amman, nor to the possibility that the Haifa-Bagdad Railway project may become a reality.

2. The French authorities, before issuing the "arrêté" of the 2nd February, took the important step of forcing the main transport concerns (the Damas-Hama et Prolongements Railway, the Nairn Transport Company and the Auto-Routière du Levant Company) into co-operation with each other in respect of the transdesert goods traffic. At the same time, the interdiction against the protégé of the Iraqi Railways, Haim Nathaniel, remains. This was instituted, it may be remembered, as a reprisal against the Iraqi Government's refusal to allow the Auto-Routière Company to operate in Iraq. The agreement between the carriers in Syria provides that (1) the Nairn Company shall hire its 20-ton Diesel-engined freight van to the Auto-Routière Company, and run and maintain it between Damascus and Bagdad at a fixed monthly rental; (2) port dues in Beirut and the railway charges to Damascus are to be reduced in respect of transit; all merchandise in transit through Syria to be carried by rail to Damascus; (3) the railway company is to erect a large shed at the Damascus goods station and provide equipment to facilitate the load shift from rail to road transport; (4) the Syrian Government will immediately set about improving the desert track from Damascus to the Iraqi frontier and, lastly, if after six months' experience the results are encouraging, the railway company will finance a 40-ton Diesel trailer-van desert "train," to be operated by the Nairn Company.

3. It is becoming evident that national jealousies are removing the trans-desert problem into the airy realm of international politics and away from the realities of commercial enterprise and normal economics. It is, perhaps, to-day, only of academic interest to seek out the original sinner who started the race to Persia, but it is curious that the finger of fate seems to point to the not unromantic figure of Haim Nathaniel, the Jewish protégé of the Iraqi Railways, whose log-rolling with the railway appears to have resulted in the discouragement of foreign motor transport enterprise in Iraq. The French reaction to it led, perhaps, to Haim's enthusiasm for the Haifa route and his urgings that the Haifa-Bagdad Railway should be speedily pushed on to snatch away the Damascus trade with Bagdad and the Aleppo trade with Mosul.

4. In the struggle the pioneer British firm—the Nairn Transport Company—operating from territory under French influence, finds itself in an uncomfortable position between the British Iraqi-Palestine anvil and the Franco-Syrian hammer. Mr. Nairn was told in Bagdad the other day by a British adviser in the Iraqi Government that the Iraqi officials looked with disfavour on his company's co-operation with the Auto-Routière Company because it was a French company. (Perhaps this is only a Feiselian ghost of the 1920 Damascus *débacle*, which has not faded into oblivion.) Mr. Nairn thinks that he has been thrust into the arms of the French by pressure of Anglo-French political rivalry. Incidentally, and perhaps more importantly, he feels sceptical of the financial



and technical ability of the Iraqis to build and keep up a road that will compete commercially with that between Damascus and Bagdad, which is the shortest and is favoured by the physical features of the terrain.

5. With reference to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes's despatch No. 356 of the 7th June, 1933, it may be noticed that motor convoys, other than passenger-carrying vehicles, are allowed to leave Damascus and do so every day of the week. In the same despatch (paragraph 9) it was suggested that Haim Nathaniel was inundated with demands for co-operation with the Syrian transporters. I am given to understand, on reliable authority, that it is rather a case that it is he who is constantly seeking encouragement from the French to divert his trans-desert traffic to the more economical Damascus route. It is not difficult to gain the impression at this end that Mr. Nathaniel, astute son of his race, would not hesitate to throw in his lot with the French and Syrians, on their terms, if it should ever happen that the political weathercock in Iraq showed the wind blowing against England and Palestine.

6. I have sent copies of this despatch to Bagdad, Beirut and Jerusalem.  
I have, &c.

GILBERT MACKERETH.

[E 1247/1247/89]

No. 178.

*Acting Consul-General Havard to Sir John Simon.—(Received February 26.)*

(No. 20.)

Sir,

*Beirut, February 14, 1934.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 17 of the 5th February regarding the departure of the French High Commissioner to Paris and to my despatch No. 10 O.T. of the 24th January to the Department of Overseas Trade regarding the call for tenders for the prolongation of the railway from Tell Ziouane, near Nissibin, to the Iraq frontier, I have the honour to inform you that, according to a statement which has appeared in the *Commerce du Levant*, work on the 85-kilom. stretch which separates Tell Ziouane from the Iraq frontier will begin on the 1st March and will be pushed ahead actively. Nothing appears yet to have been decided regarding the prolongation in Iraq towards Mosul and thereafter the Persian frontier, but diplomatic conversations are said to be continuing.

2. It appears to be the intention to create a free zone at Aleppo, and it is stated that sheds and depots will shortly be under construction. Moreover, the D.H.P. have ordered four Lorraine-Dietrich motor engines which they hope to have working by October between Tripoli and Aleppo, and they hope that the distance will be covered in four and a half hours. There will be two trains in each direction daily with one mixed night train for goods and passengers. The prolongation of this railway is said to be one of the principal matters which the French High Commissioner will discuss in Paris, and the director of the service of control of the concessionary company is leaving here shortly for Paris with all the necessary documentary information.

3. The authorities are also considering the possibility of building a new broad-gauge railway from Beirut to Damascus via Rayak, and engineers are said to have been instructed to draw up plans of possible alignment as well as an estimate of expenditure.

4. The mandatory authorities seem suddenly to have awakened to the fact that, if Beirut is to prevent its transit trade from falling entirely into the hands of Haifa, they must get down to work at once, and much feverish activity in various directions may be expected when next month the High Commissioner returns from Paris.

Copies of this despatch have been sent to the Department of Overseas Trade, His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad, His Majesty's High Commissioner at Jerusalem, His Majesty's consuls at Damascus and Aleppo.

I have, &c.

G. T. HAVARD.

[E 1217/6/65]

No. 179.

*Acting Consul-General Havard to Sir John Simon.—(Received February 23.)*

(No. 21.)

Sir,

*Beirut, February 15, 1934.*

WITH reference to Sir Harold Satow's despatch No. 181 of the 21st November, 1927, I have the honour to transmit herewith copies of a decree<sup>(1)</sup> No. 28/L.R. of the 2nd instant which restates and develops the existing regulations regarding the exemption from customs duties of the motor cars, fuel, &c., used by transport companies on the desert route, and which also lays down the conditions under which goods will be carried in transit between the rail-head and the frontier.

2. The decree of the 26th March, 1932, to which reference is made, simply states that the carriage of goods in international transit is entrusted to the Compagnie de Chemin de Fer Damas-Hama et Prolongement for the stage Beirut-Damascus, under the terms of an agreement dated the 21st March, 1932. The new decree covers the further stage to the frontier. I am informed that its terms will tend to favour serious concerns with capital, and stamp out the competition of mushroom companies, since the latter will be unable to provide the containers specified or to operate units sufficiently large to reduce the cost per ton per 100 kilom. within the prescribed limits. A return will thus be guaranteed on capital expended for large units, such as the multi-wheeled vehicle recently brought from America by the Nairn Transport Company, which carries thirty-one passengers inside, with their baggage. Further, I am reliably informed that the Nairn Company has entered into a working arrangement with the Société auto-routière du Levant, an off-shoot of the railway company; effective control of the entire route is thus placed in French hands, with the benefit of Mr. Nairn's experience of desert transport.

Copies of this despatch have been sent to the Department of Overseas Trade, His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad, His Majesty's High Commissioner at Jerusalem and His Majesty's consul at Damascus.

I have, &c.

G. T. HAVARD.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

[E 1279/96/31]

No. 180.

*Sir E. Drummond to Sir John Simon.—(Received February 27.)*

(No. 160.)

Sir,

*Rome, February 19, 1934.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 153 of the 13th February, I have the honour to inform you that Dr. Weizmann came to see me this morning.

2. He is on his way to Palestine and had been received by Signor Mussolini. He told me that his reception by the Head of the Government had been extremely cordial. Signor Mussolini had always been in favour of a national home for the Jews in Palestine, but on this occasion he had expressed himself even more warmly than usual on the subject. A further proof of Signor Mussolini's support was furnished by the fact that the Marquis Theodoli, who previously had been somewhat critical of the Zionist movement, showed the greatest anxiety to be of help and assistance to Dr. Weizmann in every way.

3. Dr. Weizmann stated that Signor Mussolini had enquired whether Palestine could not be divided up into cantons, some of which might be reserved for the Arabs and some for the Jews. Dr. Weizmann had replied that a division of the country already existed in fact. The mass, namely, fully 75 per cent., of Arabs lived in the hill districts, while the Jews were mainly settled on the coast and in the plain. There were only two small Jewish colonies in these hill regions.

4. Apparently Signor Mussolini had remarked that there must be, ultimately, a Jewish State, an assertion which Dr. Weizmann informed me he had never made before. Further, he had told Dr. Weizmann that if the Arabs were inclined to make trouble, he thought that he could keep them in order, as he



could exercise considerable influence with regard to them. I hinted to Dr. Weizmann that it might be that in this respect Signor Mussolini was inclined to over-estimate his own powers, but in view of the last paragraph of your despatch under reference, I did not think it wise to pursue the matter further with him. You are no doubt aware of Dr. Weizmann's general views and of the difficulties which he is experiencing as a moderate man in restraining the violence of the extreme Zionists, who are continually criticising the mandatory Power for insufficient encouragement of the national home.

5. Dr. Weizmann finally explained to me that he was considerably troubled by the large influx of German Jews into Palestine. They did not form an altogether satisfactory element and were difficult to absorb. On the other hand, there were still hundreds of thousands of such Jews who had sought refuge in France, Poland and Czechoslovakia. In the present state of unemployment in these countries naturally the coming of such Jews was disliked, and therefore anti-Semitic feeling was increasing, but he did not see how they could possibly be admitted in such numbers into Palestine.

I have, &c.

ERIC DRUMMOND.

[E 1505/1247/89]

No. 181.

*Consul Cowan to Sir John Simon.—(Received March 8.)*

(No. 2.)

Sir,

*Aleppo, February 27, 1934.*

WITH reference to Beirut despatch to you, No. 20 of the 14th February, I have the honour to report that several waggon-loads of railway material have already been despatched to railhead at Tell Ziwan for the construction of the 85 kilom. of railway line to the Iraq frontier. The award of the tender has not yet been announced. This is in the hands of M. Dagrass, an old French Public Works official, who has been in Syria since the beginning of the French occupation. M. Dagrass will exercise general supervision over the construction on behalf of the railway company.

2. No steps have yet been taken for the creation of a free zone at Aleppo, not even a site having been selected, though it will probably be on the open ground in the neighbourhood of the Bagdad railway station. There has been talk of the creation of a free zone at Alexandretta, and it is possible that one may be created there as well as at Aleppo.

3. It is rumoured here that the proposal to extend the railway beyond the Iraq frontier is meeting with considerable opposition from the Iraq Government, but there is no confirmation of this.

4. I am sending copies of this despatch to the Department of Overseas Trade, His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad, His Majesty's Commissioner at Jerusalem and His Majesty's consular officers at Beirut and Damascus.

I have, &c.

N. PATRICK COWAN.

[E 2120/6/65]

No. 182.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received April 5.)*

(No. 159.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, March 20, 1934.*

SINCE the desert route from Damascus to Bagdad was first opened for passenger traffic by the Nairn Transport Company in 1925, there has been a gradual but steady increase in the carriage of freight across the desert by motor transport. At first this traffic consisted mainly of light and valuable goods; but, in the past two or three years, transport rates have fallen to such an extent as greatly to expand its scope. The ruling freight rate from Bagdad to Damascus is now £5 a ton, or less than 2½d. a ton-mile and, despite the restrictions imposed on foreign trade by the Persian Government, who have endeavoured as far as

possible to divert traffic from routes through Iraq, the overland freight traffic between Persia and the Mediterranean via Bagdad has gradually expanded.

2. In 1932, Haim Effendi Nathaniel, the canvassing agent of the Iraqi Railways, who may be said virtually to control transport in Iraq, began to operate freight services on the southern trans-desert route which runs from Rutbah across Transjordan via Amman to Jerusalem and Haifa, and does not traverse Syria. He was urged to do so by the director of the Iraqi Railways, who wished to establish direct freight connexion between Bagdad and Haifa with an eye to the proposed trans-desert railway. He was also encouraged by the authorities in Palestine, who saw possibilities of fresh traffic for Haifa. He obtained mail contracts by this route from both the Iraqi and the Palestinian Governments, which he used as a nucleus for his services.

3. The French and Syrian authorities shortly afterwards awoke to the fact that the commerce of Syria was likely to suffer from development of the Port of Haifa and, in particular, that establishment of direct motor traffic between Haifa and Bagdad would constitute a menace to Beirut's entrepôt trade, especially if it were to be followed by the construction of a railway. They accordingly decided to develop the overland routes through Syria to such an extent as to render them immune to competition by the southern route, and to secure for Beirut, rather than Haifa, all the Mediterranean trade of Iraq and Persia. In his despatch No. 356 of the 17th June, 1933, Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes reported the visit to Bagdad of a director of the Damas, Hama, et Prolongement Railway Company, which made this abundantly clear.

4. The late King Feisal was strongly opposed to these French designs. After the visit of M. Blanquet, he announced that the direct Bagdad-Haifa route must be developed forthwith in order to counteract the French threat to Iraqi communications; and he set up a permanent transport board to consider the whole question.

5. As from the 1st July, 1933, the Iraqi Government officially notified the Bagdad-Haifa route a "transit route" for customs purposes. The effect is to exempt from full Iraqi customs duties goods consigned in transit through Iraq by this route, leaving them liable only to the transit dues of one-tenth of 1 per cent. This did not, however, suffice to attract traffic to the route.

6. At the beginning of June 1933 Yasin Pasha Al Hashimi, then Minister of Finance, left for London as head of the Iraqi economic delegation. He was authorised, *inter alia*, "to settle the question of the facilities to be granted at Haifa to goods consigned in transit via Palestine to Iraq." In January 1933 the High Commissioner in Palestine had invited the Iraqi Government to send a representative to Palestine for discussion of possible facilities and concessions for Iraqi traffic in transit via Palestine; and Yasin Pasha's journey was a suitable opportunity to take advantage of this invitation. He was accompanied by Mr. Sievwright, the Director of Customs and Excise. A subsequent discussion in the Colonial Office was attended by Yasin Pasha, Mr. Sievwright and Mr. Hogg, the Adviser to the Iraqi Ministry of Finance. Proposals on the following lines were drawn up by the Palestine Government on the basis of these discussions and were communicated to the Iraqi Government in October 1933:—

Provided that the Iraqi Government will give an undertaking to use their best endeavours to promote the development of traffic by the Haifa-Bagdad route, the Government of Palestine will—

- (i) Offer free zone facilities to Iraqi goods at Haifa; and
- (ii) Arrange, for a minimum period of three years, the following benefits for traffic by the Haifa-Bagdad route:—
  - (a) The provision and maintenance of a motor road through the lava region in Transjordan east of Mafrak.
  - (b) The provision and maintenance of a motor road from Mafrak to Irbid in Transjordan.
  - (c) The exemption from Palestinian import duty of Iraqi barley and ghi imported by the Transjordan route.
  - (d) The reduction of the Palestinian import duties on Iraqi dates and rice so imported.
  - (e) Reciprocity as regards licence fees leviable on motor vehicles using that route.



7. For various reasons the Iraqi Government were slow to give the undertaking required by the Government of Palestine; and during the present month these proposals were amplified in a further communication to the Iraqi Government on the following lines:—

- (a) Provided they guarantee for the Transjordan route as favourable facilities as those accorded to traffic using the Syria overland routes, the Iraqi Government may qualify their undertaking by a stipulation to the effect that they are not prepared actively to discriminate in favour of that route.
- (b) The proposed agreement may be extended automatically in the absence of twelve months' notice of withdrawal by either side.
- (c) Palestinian import duties on ten specified commodities, comprising the remaining principal exports from Iraq to Palestine, will not be raised during the duration of the agreement in the absence of six months' notice.
- (d) The motor road between Irbid and Mafrak will be completed as soon as possible.
- (e) If desired, a portion of one of the existing sheds at Haifa will be set aside for the exclusive use of Iraqi goods pending reservation of part of the port area for purposes of a free zone.
- (f) Iraqi traffic will not be exploited in the port of Haifa through the medium of port dues and handling charges, or otherwise.

8. Further delay has been occasioned by the fall of the Cabinet. The proposals of the Government of Palestine are still under consideration by the Permanent Transport Board, and no decision is likely to be given until the new Ministers have disposed of the budget and have had time to digest them.

9. While the development of the Transjordan route is thus hanging fire, the French have made considerable progress on the Syrian routes. A French motor-transport company operating in Syria, the Compagnie Auto-Routière du Levant, has been taken over by the subsidised Damas, Hama, et Prolongement Railway Company. The Nairn Transport Company is associated with this combine; and so is the port of Beirut, where a free zone for transit goods was inaugurated in January 1934. Full customs exemption is given in respect of vehicles, fuel and accessories required for the transit traffic, for which port dues in Beirut and rail charges to Damascus have been much reduced. The Nairn Transport Company have already brought into commission on the Damascus-Bagdad route a Marmon-Herrington "semi-trailer truck" with a capacity of 20 tons. If this is a success, the railway company are prepared to finance the introduction of larger units to the same design, notably a 40-ton "trailer train." It is said that funds are being allotted for construction of a motor road from Damascus to the Iraqi frontier. Steps have already been taken for extension of the Nisibin Railway to the Iraqi frontier in order to encourage, in addition, transit traffic by Syrian routes through Mosul and Rowanduz. A free zone at Aleppo is proposed and another at Alexandretta. The French High Commissioner recently made a public announcement emphasising the importance of development of the trans-desert routes in order to safeguard Syria's transit trade. The goodwill of the Persian Government has been sought, and apparently obtained.

10. The Iraqi Government have proved even less receptive to overtures from Syria than to those from Palestine. In December 1933, when Nuri Pasha Al Said was Minister for Foreign Affairs, the French Chargé d'Affaires in Bagdad proposed to him the conclusion of a far-reaching trade agreement between Iraq and Syria. He replied that the Iraqi Government would be happy to enter into negotiations with Syrians, but declined to do so direct with the French. On the other hand, the Iraqi Government have taken no active steps to obstruct the French plans. The Auto-Routière Company operate in Iraq and have an office in Bagdad. The only disability under which they suffer is that the Iraqi Customs have refused to register them as a licensed motor-transport company, eligible for certain privileges and concessions in regard to customs formalities. For instance, licensed transporters are allowed to go through the Ramadi customs post without examination of their goods, their manifests being accepted as reliable. The reason given by the Customs for refusal is simply that they

do not know enough about the company. No transport company receives such a licence until it has been operating for a year or more and has proved itself trustworthy. An Iraqi company is still waiting for a licence after nearly a year in commission. The Nairn Transport Company are, however, registered as licensed transporters, so that the French will have no difficulty in overcoming this disability. They are likely to appoint an agency in Bagdad with branches in Persia; and it is possible that this will be given to the Mesopotamia-Persia Corporation, the oldest established British house in this country, who represent P. and O. interests and Lloyd's, and are associated with the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company operating river steamer services. As Khedivial mail agents, they are the only company able to issue through return tickets by the overland route between Bagdad and Jedda in conformity with the sanitary regulations governing the pilgrimage to Mecca. Consequently, although they operate no trans-desert transport themselves and contract with various trans-desert concerns for the purpose, they are the official agents authorised by the Iraqi Government to issue overland pilgrim tickets and are in a strong position in relation to this traffic.

11. Meanwhile, Haim Effendi continues to operate his mail convoys via Amman in the hope that the Iraqi and Palestinian Governments will eventually decide to assist development of the Transjordan route. In September 1933 the British Post Office took away the greater part of his overland mails from London, diverting them to the Simplon Express-Damascus route. Although it is understood that towards the end of February 1934 the British Post Office again reverted part of the overland mails to the Jerusalem-Transjordan route, one London mail weekly is still despatched via Simplon and Damascus. Apart from the mails, there can be little traffic by the Transjordan route until the proposed measures for its development are implemented.

12. The French, indeed, appear confident that the geographical advantages of the Damascus route are sufficiently great to ensure its supremacy. The distances involved between Bagdad and the Mediterranean are approximately as follows:—

Damascus route—				Miles.
Bagdad-Rutbah	...	...	...	265
Rutbah-Damascus	...	...	...	272
Damascus-Beirut	...	...	...	68
				605
Existing Transjordan route via Amman and Jerusalem—				Miles.
Bagdad-Rutbah	...	...	...	265
Rutbah-Amman	...	...	...	275
Amman-Jerusalem	...	...	...	75
Jerusalem-Haifa	...	...	...	100
				715
Proposed Transjordan route via Mafrak, Irbid, Tiberias—				Miles.
Bagdad-Rutbah	...	...	...	265
Rutbah-Mafrak	...	...	...	245
Mafrak-Haifa	...	...	...	110
				620

It is clear that the existing Transjordan route cannot compete with the Damascus route on equal terms. It is more than 100 miles longer and traverses very much more difficult country, including 50 miles in the lava belt. On the other hand, if the proposed motor road via Mafrak and Irbid were constructed, the distance from Bagdad to the sea via Transjordan would be little greater than via Damascus, and the other difficulties of the route would be greatly ameliorated. Competition on equal terms should then be feasible.



13. The only definite statistics of trans-desert traffic available from Iraqi Government sources are the following, obtained from the Director of Transport in the Bagdad Municipality, from whom a pass has to be obtained for each journey from Bagdad across the desert:—

1933: *West-bound Traffic from Bagdad.*

	No. of Passes issued.	Nominal Capacity in Tons.
Lorries to Damascus ...	1,072	3,500 <sup>(1)</sup>
Lorries to Amman ...	220	800 <sup>(1)</sup>
		4,300

<sup>(1)</sup> Generally overloaded by as much as 20 per cent.

*Passengers.*

Passenger cars to Damascus ...	1,086
Passenger cars to Amman ...	10

In the first two months of 1934 there was a slight increase in the number of lorries leaving Bagdad by the Amman route.

14. The Iraqi Customs Department prepare no separate compilations relating to trans-desert trade, but the foreign trade statistics published by the French High Commissioner in Beirut show the traffic between Iraq, Persia and the French mandated territories in the Levant, of which a summary for the past three calendar years is attached. These statistics include traffic by all routes, not only direct between Damascus and Bagdad, but also with Mosul and by sea between Basra and Beirut. They also include purely local traffic, which does not concern the Government of Palestine. The basis on which they are compiled is not very clear, since, although the figures for total imports and total exports are said to include those for the direct transit trade, the latter are the greater in reference to Persia for 1933. However, the direct transit totals may perhaps be taken as indicating the present volume of the overland international trade passing through Syria which might be diverted to Palestine by the Transjordan route. In 1931 the east-bound tonnage declared in transit via Syria was 793 tons to Iraq and 285 tons to Persia, or a total of 1,078 tons; and the west-bound tonnage was 746 tons from Iraq and 1,682 tons from Persia, or 2,428 tons. By 1932 the east-bound transit tonnage had reached 4,958 tons to Iraq and 499 tons to Persia, or a total of 5,457 tons; and the west-bound 1,314 tons from Iraq and 4,222 from Persia, or a total of 5,536 tons. As about 60 per cent. of the goods declared in transit via Syria during 1933 were consigned in the December quarter, after the French had instituted their measures for encouragement of this trade, substantially higher tonnage under the international transit régime may be anticipated for 1934.

15. It is interesting to compare these totals with those given in Messrs. Rendel, Palmer and Tritton's Haifa-Bagdad Railway survey report (p. 129 of vol. I), wherein the average cross-desert traffic from 1928 to 1930 was estimated at 2,300 tons east-bound (1,700 tons to Bagdad and 600 tons to Persia) and 2,300 tons west-bound (1,400 tons from Bagdad and 900 tons from Persia).

16. From the Iraqi point of view it is of great importance that the routes to the Mediterranean should be developed in a manner which will ensure the maximum benefit to the country. Bagdad was once the leading entrepôt market for Western Persia, goods being imported by sea to Basra, by river to Bagdad and thence by camel into Persia via Khanikin. During the war the development of the port of Basra and the construction of the railway from Basra to Khanikin gave promise of considerable increase in this transit trade; but for the past decade the Persian Government have done all they can to eliminate Iraq from Persia's communications. So far as Persian Gulf traffic is concerned, they have largely succeeded, since importations to Western Persia are now mainly consigned to the Persian ports of Bandar Shahpur or Mohammerah. However, in the comparatively recent development for freight of the overland routes to the Mediterranean, Iraqis see some hope of reviving their Persian entrepôt market. This is not merely a matter of transport. The transit trade used to be financed in Bagdad, and may be said to have been the principal business of the city. Iraqis do not want it revived by, and for the benefit of, Syrians and the French,

who wish to make Beirut the real entrepôt centre. They want it revived by, and for the benefit of, Iraqis. This applies especially to potential through traffic via the Rowanduz road, on which the Iraqi Government have spent large sums. The French mean to eliminate Bagdad altogether from this traffic, and to transport Persian goods via Nisibin and Mosul with the minimum benefit to Iraq. Iraqis therefore dislike the French plans to control trans-desert traffic, and, although the death of King Feisal has removed much of the driving force in favour of Haim Effendi, they would welcome effective competition by the Transjordan route. They are, however, suspicious of a request for a definite undertaking to promote the development of a particular route, and Ministers are reluctant to take the responsibility of giving it.

17. From the point of view of the Government of Palestine, the diversion to Haifa of the trans-desert transit trade is highly desirable. Although as yet comparatively small, it is one which is capable of great expansion, especially in the event of relaxation of the trade restrictions in Persia. The advantages to Palestine which will result from the establishment of the Transjordan route are greater than those which will accrue to Iraq. It therefore appears to me that the Government of Palestine will be well advised to proceed without waiting for an official assurance of co-operation from the Iraqi Government with their proposals for its development, and especially with the road construction, which will shorten it by nearly 100 miles. The delay is playing into the hands of the French, giving them valuable time to consolidate their position on the Syrian routes.

18. It also appears to me only reasonable to accord Haim Effendi the full customs franchise for vehicles, fuel and accessories for which he has applied to the Government of Palestine, especially as he will deal exclusively with transit traffic and will not compete in local traffic either for passengers or freight. This is no more than his competitors obtain in Syria, and, without official support on the Transjordan route at least equal to that given on the Syrian route, which is shorter and more convenient, he cannot hope to compete with the French subsidised group. He is under no obligation to continue to operate at a loss via Haifa, and can still make profits via Damascus. The French dare not exclude him from Syrian routes for fear of retaliation by the Iraqi Government against the Auto-Routière. Last year they made many unsuccessful attempts to induce him to co-operate with them. They would still no doubt be glad to come to terms with him if only because he is the sole transporter who has yet operated regularly on the Rowanduz route to Persia. If he is denied full franchise in Palestine, it is very probable that he will join them and abandon the Transjordan route altogether. I can see little prospect of developing it without the assistance of Haim's controlling influence in the transport of Iraq, and, if the motor route ignominiously fails, it will react unfavourably on the prospects of the railway.

19. I may add that Haim Effendi proposes to use British motor vehicles for his passenger service, which is more than any other trans-desert transport company has yet attempted.

20. The matter has been fully discussed with Sir Arthur Wauchop during his visit to Bagdad this month, and I understand that the Government of Palestine are prepared to give to Haim Effendi approximately the same facilities as are given in Syria to trans-desert transporters, provided that there is no question of establishment of a monopoly. Haim Effendi is now in Jerusalem discussing with the Treasurer to the Palestine Government the exact assistance he requires and the possibilities of improving the Transjordan route at an early date.

21. I have sent copies of this despatch to His Majesty's High Commissioner, Jerusalem, His Majesty's Minister, Tehran, His Majesty's consul-general, Beirut, and the Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.



Enclosure in No. 182.

*Statistics of Trade between Iraq and Persia and the French Mandated Territories in the Levant.<sup>(1)</sup>*

(In Metric Tons.)

	Total Imports by Countries of Origin.	Imports for Local Consumption by Countries of Origin.	Total Exports by Countries of Destination.	Exports of Local Products by Countries of Destination.	Re-exports by Countries of Destination.	Direct Transit by Countries of Origin.	Direct Transit by Countries of Destination.
1931 <sup>(2)</sup> —							
Iraq ..	2,647	1,905	2,361	1,222	346	746	793
Persia ..	2,206	524	331	6	40	1,682	285
1932 <sup>(2)</sup> —							
Iraq ..	5,680	4,839	4,353	1,747	246	841	2,960
Persia ..	2,895	992	476	8	38	1,903	430
1933 <sup>(2)</sup> —							
Iraq ..	8,882	5,116	4,734	1,810	153	1,314 <sup>(4)</sup>	4,938 <sup>(4)</sup>
Persia ..	3,014	412	343	13	26	4,222 <sup>(4)</sup>	499 <sup>(4)</sup>

<sup>(1)</sup> Includes all routes such as Dair-al-Zor-Mosul and not only Damascus-Bagdad.<sup>(2)</sup> Extracted from *Statistiques générales du Commerce extérieur*, published by the Beirut High Commission.<sup>(3)</sup> Compiled from the quarterly *Bulletin économique*, published by the Beirut High Commission.<sup>(4)</sup> In each case about 60 per cent. in the last quarter.

[E 2155/202/89]

No. 183

*Consul Mackereth to Sir John Simon.—(Received April 6.)*(No. 19.)  
Sir,

Damascus, March 12, 1934.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 62 of the 8th December, 1933, I have the honour to report that the French High Commissioner, immediately on his return from France, issued a decree, dated the 10th March 1934, prolonging the suspension of the sittings of the Syrian Parliament until the 16th October next. By the same decree the continuance of the form of government instituted by the "arrêté" 176/LR (my despatch No. 63 of the 8th December, 1933), is enacted.

2. This order was not entirely unexpected, for one of the many remarks attributed to M. de Martel by journalists, to whom he seems to have been singularly accessible during his recent trip to Paris, was "Le traité est signé; à nous de l'exécuter," and it has been widely commented upon. The spread of a popular belief that France wants to stand by the treaty, already signed, but rejected by Parliament, is unlikely to simplify the task of obtaining its ratification (if this is indeed the French goal) by a representative Assembly.

3. I am sending copies of this despatch to Aleppo, Amman, Bagdad, Beirut, Cairo, Jedda and Jerusalem.

I have, &amp;c.

GILBERT MACKERETH.

[E 2593/2593/31]

No. 184.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received April 26.)*(No. 185.)  
Sir,

Bagdad, April 10, 1934.

I HAVE the honour to report that His Highness the Amir Abdullah arrived in Bagdad from Amman on the afternoon of the 1st April, accompanied by his younger son, the Amir Naif, and his principal private secretary, Sheikh Fuad Pasha Al Khatib.

2. On the following day I called on His Highness at the palace. During the course of our conversation I congratulated him on the great improvement which he had succeeded in bringing about in the relations between Transjordan and Saudi Arabia, and expressed the hope that any misunderstandings which still remained would soon be settled. The Amir echoed this hope and said that he would continue to work to strengthen the bonds of friendship between the two Arab States. I received the impression, however, that His Highness was not speaking to me with his usual frankness.

3. On the 6th April His Highness lunched at the Embassy and in the afternoon was present at a small reception given by King Ghazi, to which Sir Edward Ellington and the Air Officer Commanding were also invited. On the following Sunday he left Bagdad for Amman.

4. The declared purpose of His Highness's visit was to see his brother, King Ali, whose health has recently been far from good. It may, however, be safely assumed that many matters of wider significance than the ex-King's health were discussed with King Ghazi, King Ali, and other members of the Hashimite family now in Bagdad. Moreover, the fact that the at one time notorious Akhwan rebel, Farhan-bin-Mashhur (see page 34 of Annual Report for 1930), was present in Bagdad at the same time as the Amir Abdullah, and that on his return the Amir took in his suite the fugitive Ataiyah chief, Naif-bin-Humaid, will probably, when reported to Mecca by the Saudi Legation, give rise to profound suspicion of His Highness's activities here and may even provoke a protest.

5. The Amir's visit has received little comment in the local press, but one nationalist journal professed to see a significant connexion between this event and Sir Arthur Wauchop's private visit to me, which took place only a few days earlier. The deduction made was that a political development of great importance to the Arabs was about to take place, which might well be the union of Palestine and Transjordan under the rule of the Amir Abdullah.

6. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's High Commissioner for Palestine and Transjordan at Jerusalem and to His Majesty's Minister at Jedda.

I have, &amp;c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

[E 2717/1247/89]

No. 185.

*Mr. Cowan to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 1.)*(No. 8.)  
Sir,

Aleppo, April 3, 1934.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 2 of the 27th February, I have the honour to report that the contract for the first 18 kilom. of the Tell-Ziwan-Mosul line has been given to a Beirut contractor, M. Samaho. This section is to be completed in six months, and work was supposed to begin on the 1st April. The award for the second section is to be made between the 10th and 15th April.

2. I am informed that the object of this extension of the railway line is not to develop the port of Alexandretta, but of Tripoli. The distance from Aleppo to Tripoli is 45 kilom. longer than to Alexandretta, but the rate charged will be the same for both ports, and it is confidently believed that harbour works are to be started at Tripoli. Seeing that the railway to Alexandretta passes through Turkish territory and that the port itself is very near the Turkish frontier, such a policy is only natural, but it has greatly alienated the sympathies of the population of the sanjak.

3. I have paid particular attention to the question of the general feeling in the sanjak towards the French mandate, and have come to the conclusion that it is very strongly anti-French. The population have more in common with Turkey than with Syria, especially in language, and the neglect of the sanjak by the mandatory Power, especially the failure to develop Alexandretta, the finest natural harbour on the coast, has increased this pro-Turkish sentiment. It is commonly believed that France has a secret agreement with Turkey to return the Sanjak to her, but nobody has any idea of what the French hope to obtain in return for this concession. Occasional denials on the part of the French and

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2 H 2



Turkish authorities of the existence of such a policy are not believed. Of course, the transfer would be done in a correct manner, through the League of Nations, as a result of a plebiscite. There is no doubt that in Alexandretta itself public opinion is overwhelmingly in favour of union with Turkey. In Antioch the younger generation also favour such a union, but Antioch is a stronghold of clericalism and large estates, and the clericals and landed proprietors mistrust modern Turkey as anti-Islamic and democratic. I believe, however, that the balance of opinion would favour a transfer to Turkey. In the country districts, with the exception of the Armenian population of Kirik Khan, the feeling is decidedly pro-Turkish.

4. That such a transfer would be beneficial to the town of Alexandretta cannot be doubted. This port is the natural outlet from and entry into Anatolia, with which it already has railway connexions, and it could be made a valuable naval base.

5. If the connexion with Tripoli is established, Aleppo would suffer to a certain extent, though much less than Alexandretta. It would lose much of its present importance as a distributing centre, but would remain an important transit place and railway junction. The natives of Aleppo have long been renowned as craftsmen, and although modern developments have left them to some extent stranded, the manufacturing instinct is still there, and it is possible that in the future Aleppo may attain eminence as a large manufacturing centre, provided that an outlet can be found for the goods manufactured.

6. I am sending copies of this despatch to the Department of Overseas Trade, His Majesty's High Commissioner at Jerusalem, His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad, and His Majesty's consular officers at Beirut, Damascus and Alexandretta.

I have, &c.

M. PATRICK COWAN.

[E 2718/2398/89]

No. 186.

*Consul Mackereth to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 1.)*

(No. 26.)

Sir,

*Damascus, April 11, 1934.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 23 of the 24th March, 1934, concerning the acquisition of agricultural lands at El Batiha, I have the honour to inform you that a deputation from the inhabitants of the Hauran came to Damascus on the 9th April to protest against the sale of lands to Jews and against what they described as Zionist penetration into Syria.

2. The Prime Minister of the Syrian Government, in reply to the leaders of the deputation, is reported in the press to have said: "Je suis un gardien fidèle des destinées de la chère nation syrienne et aucun sionisme ne pourra s'approprier aucune parcelle du terrain syrien. Tranquillisez vos esprits. Les juifs n'entreront en Syrie tant que je suis au pouvoir!" [sic].

3. The French acting delegate, who also received a visit from the Hauran deputation, is stated to have reminded them that the High Commissioner had recently approved an "arrêté" (16/LR of the 18th January, 1934) which "s'oppose à toute immigration, soit par la vente de terrains, soit par des locations à longs termes, à tout étranger, fût-il sioniste ou non." Mr. David added that that decree was the best guarantee possible against any Zionist expansion. Pressed by the deputation to state whether his declaration might be taken as a definite engagement, the delegate assured them that they could consider it as such. He then invited the deputation to calm the Hauran population in his name.

4. It remains to be seen what effect the "arrêté" dated the 18th January, 1934, and the later official pronouncements on this subject will have on the sale of the El Batiha lands to the Zionists.

5. I am sending copies of this despatch to Amman, Beirut and Jerusalem.

I have, &c.

GILBERT MACKERETH.

[E 3114/6/65]

No. 187.

*Papers communicated by the Colonial Office, May 10, 1934.*

(1)

*High Commissioner for Palestine to Sir P. Cunliffe-Lister.*

(Confidential.)

*High Commissioner for Palestine,*

Sir,

*Jerusalem, April 26, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to refer to your confidential despatch of the 10th May, 1933, in which you approved my proposals to grant Haim Eff. Nathaniel certain facilities to assist him to open up the transdesert route between Iraq and Palestine, and to inform you that in view of changed conditions in Syria, under which transdesert transport services are granted more considerable concessions in the matter of port and customs facilities, Haim Eff. was unable to adhere to the original proposal of allowing him drawbacks of customs import duty, although he had previously accepted that proposal. I therefore authorised the Treasurer to open further conversations with Haim Eff., in the course of which Haim Eff. pointed out that the Syrian authorities had, by recent legislation, of which a translation is attached,<sup>(1)</sup> granted customs franchise to companies running the transdesert transport service in respect of motor vehicles, tyres, tubes, spare parts, fuel oil and lubricating oil. He further stated that he was unable to use the Palestine route with a reasonable prospect of success, unless similar facilities were granted by Palestine.

2. As a result of these discussions, the Treasurer has formulated definite proposals, and I submit a copy of his minute on the subject.<sup>(1)</sup>

3. I have considered the Treasurer's proposals in Executive Council and have reached the conclusion that the following concessions should be granted to Haim Eff. and to any other company fulfilling the requisite conditions in order to assure a proper and regular service:—

(a) Exemption from customs duty on motor vehicles and tyres and tubes imported direct to Palestine by the company or withdrawn from customs on a delivery order in its name, provided that such motor vehicles and tyres and tubes are not used for local transport in or between Palestine and Transjordan.

(b) Exemption from import duty on petrol, provided that the company obtains its requirements from stocks in bond.

The motor vehicle tanks shall be filled under customs supervision and sealed by a customs officer. The seals shall be inspected at the frontier. Similarly, on the inward journey the car tanks will be sealed at the frontier by the customs officer and inspected at the bonded store.

(c) Reduced licence fees under the Road Transport Ordinance as indicated hereunder:—

(i) Public vehicles—	Mils.
Not exceeding seven persons including the driver	200
Exceeding seven persons including the driver ...	500
For every seat over seven ...	50
(ii) Commercial vehicles with four wheels, not including tractors for haulage—	
(1) Where the carrying capacity does not exceed 1,000 kilog. ...	Mils. 500
(2) Where the carrying capacity exceeds 1,000 kilog. but does not exceed 1,500 kilog. ...	£P. 1
(3) Where the carrying capacity exceeds 1,500 kilog. ...	2
(iii) Commercial vehicles with six wheels ...	3
(iv) Tractors used for haulage ...	1

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.



- (d) At Haifa, in respect of outward cargo, twenty-one days' free customs storage, and for inward cargo the ordinary rates without any addition to the charge for the first week after the franchise period.
- (e) To goods imported and exported in transit, by whatsoever enterprise, a special rate of wharfage dues, viz., 5 mils per packet weighing not more than 150 kilog. gross, provided all packets are suitably marked as in transit and are subject to check in such a manner as the Director of Customs may think fit.

4. The concessions enumerated in the preceding paragraph are subject to the following conditions:—

- (a) The concessions will be granted for a period of three years to every applicant company, provided that—
- The company shall be registered in Palestine and have a paid-up capital of not less than £P. 10,000.
  - The company shall give to Government a bond of £P. 5,000 in cash or by way of a guarantee by a bank approved by Government.
  - The company shall undertake to run from Palestine to Iraq not less than two convoys a week, and from Iraq to Palestine not less than two convoys a week. Further, it should be understood that a convoy shall mean at least two vehicles.
- (b) All motor vehicles used on the transit trade between Palestine and Iraq shall be distinctly marked "Overland Desert Route" or some similar approved mark.
- (c) Vehicles of the company shall not be allowed to ply for local hire within Palestine, that is to say, it must confine its operations to the carriage of passengers and goods on what may be described as through way-bills.
- (d) The movement of the vehicles of the company shall be limited to the routes on the basis of which the reduced licence fees are calculated.
- (e) The vehicles of the company shall, save under specific authorisation, conform to the Road Transport Regulations as regards size and axle weights, and shall otherwise comply with the said regulations.

5. With regard to the concessions which I propose to grant, I would observe that for practical purposes it would be simpler to allow exemption from customs duty rather than drawbacks as originally suggested; and so long as the company are not allowed to undertake any transport services within Palestine or Transjordan I can see no reason to withhold this concession.

The reduced fees for licences under the Road Transport Ordinance, 1929, are based approximately on the mileage of the prescribed route through Palestine, as compared with the total mileage of a journey from Iraq to Palestine.

The concession in respect of storage of outward cargo is, I think, necessary, since goods arriving from Iraq will have to be stored until shipping facility is available at the Haifa Port; and should a convoy break down a period of fourteen days may elapse before a steamer is available to take the cargo. It will be noted that I do not propose to grant the same treatment in respect of inward cargo. The transdesert transport service should provide for the removal of such cargo with despatch. I, therefore, propose to charge storage, after the ordinary period of free storage at the rate prescribed for the first week after the period of franchise.

The special rate of wharfage dues which I propose to concede is, I am advised, sufficient to meet the cost of the service.

6. I am satisfied that the concessions proposed are the minimum necessary to induce a proper transdesert service between Iraq and Palestine until the route has been opened up, having regard to the fact that the route to Beirut via Damascus is altogether a better route and shorter by approximately 250 kilom. I shall be grateful to receive your approval of these proposals by telegram in order that arrangements may be made with Haim Eff. Nathaniel to establish the service at an early date.

I have, &c.

ARTHUR WAUCHOPE,  
High Commissioner for Palestine.

(2)

Telegram from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the High Commissioner for Palestine.

May 4, 1934.

YOUR despatch of 26th April, Confidential. Proposals approved.

[E 3207/6/65]

No. 188.

Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received May 16.)

(No. 237.)

HIS Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad presents his compliments to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit to him copy of his despatch No. 17, dated the 30th April, 1934, to the High Commissioner for Palestine and Transjordan respecting the Palestine-Iraq transit trade.

Bagdad, April 30, 1934.

Enclosure 1 in No. 188.

Sir F. Humphrys to Lieut.-General Sir A. Wauchope.

(No. 17.)

Sir,

Bagdad, April 30, 1934.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 159 of the 20th March last to the Foreign Office, copy of which was sent to you in my despatch No. 9 of the same date, I have the honour to transmit herewith a translation of the reply of the Iraqi Government to the proposals of the Government of Palestine for a *modus vivendi* designed to encourage transit traffic on the Bagdad-Haifa route.

2. The Iraqi Government give the required undertaking to use their best endeavours to develop traffic by the Bagdad-Haifa route subject to a reservation that they are unable to discriminate, during the currency of the suggested *modus vivendi*, in favour of this as against the other overland routes to the Mediterranean.

3. The terms of this reservation were approved by you in the second paragraph of your despatch No. 28/M of the 22nd February last, and I consider that the undertaking now given by the Iraqi Government is sufficient to confirm the assumption expressed in that despatch to the effect that traffic using the Bagdad-Haifa route will be guaranteed facilities as favourable as those accorded to traffic using the overland routes to Syria.

4. You will observe that the enclosed note contains the specific measures for the development of transit traffic upon which the Iraqi Government believe that they have reached agreement with the Government of Palestine. I understand semi-officially that the Iraqi Government are actively pursuing the idea of forming a strong committee to report on the whole question of access to the Mediterranean in order to arrive at a definite policy, and that they would be willing to send a plenipotentiary to Jerusalem to exchange notes with the Government of Palestine bringing the *modus vivendi* into force at the earliest possible moment.

5. If, therefore, the proposals now put forward by the Iraqi Government are found to be a sufficiently accurate statement of the agreement reached with the Government of Palestine, I shall be glad to receive telegraphic notification of your concurrence in order that I may inform the Iraqi Government.

6. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the Department of Overseas Trade and the commercial agent at Haifa.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.



Enclosure 2 in No. 188.

*Note from the Iraqi Ministry for Foreign Affairs.*

THE Ministry for Foreign Affairs present their compliments to His Britannic Majesty's Embassy, Bagdad, and, with reference to the proposals contained in the Embassy's note No. 569, dated the 19th October, 1933, and amplified by the Embassy's later note No. 127, dated the 3rd March, 1934, have the honour to state as follows:—

In view of the facilities and advantages set forth in the two above-mentioned notes, the Iraqi Government undertake to use their best endeavours for the encouragement and expansion of the goods transport traffic by the Bagdad-Haifa route, but, nevertheless, are unable to undertake to adopt effective measures to discriminate in favour of the said route as against other overland routes.

For easy reference, the points over which agreement has been reached are set forth in the annexure to this note.

The Ministry avail, &c.

*Iraqi Ministry for Foreign Affairs,  
Bagdad, April 24, 1934.*

## Annexure to Enclosure 2.

1.—(a) The Government of Palestine will in due course accord free zone facilities within the Haifa port, the limits of such zone to be determined later on by agreement between the two parties and the zone to be considered as enjoying extraterritorial rights.

With the normal expansion of the port it is suggested that these facilities will be available before

(NOTE.—No date is mentioned in the correspondence. If such date is not to be before the end of the experimental period, the last clause may be omitted.)

(b) The Iraqi Government shall have the right, if they deem it convenient, to appoint customs officials of their own in the free zone, and such officials shall have the right to import free of customs duty articles required by them for their personal consumption and the consumption of their families living with them in Haifa.

(c) The Director of Customs, Palestine, or his deputy, shall have right of access at all times to the free zone, and may, if he deems it necessary to do so, call out the police to enter the said zone.

(d) It is agreed that, in case of any doubt arising over any matter relating to the administration and use of the free zone, reference should be made to the arrangements relating to the free zone in the city of Salonica.

(e) Until such time as free zone facilities have been provided, goods consigned to or from Iraq, and also goods passing through Iraq in transit, shall be entitled to free storage in the port area for a period not exceeding twenty-eight days.

(f) The Government of Palestine are willing to place at the disposal of the Iraqi Government accommodation (sheds) for storage in the existing port. While fully appreciating this offer, the Iraqi Government believe that the time has not yet arrived to benefit therefrom. They will address the Government of Palestine later on on the subject, should they in future desire to avail themselves of this offer.

2.—(a) The Government of Palestine agree, with effect from the date of entry into operation of the present *modus vivendi*, to reduce as below the rates of customs duty on the following commodities imported into Palestine by the Bagdad-Haifa route:—

Commodity.	From.	To.
Rice ... ..	2 mls. per kilog.	1 ml. per kilog.
Dates ... ..	5 mls.	
Fresh ... ..	1 ml.	} per kilog. ... ½ ml. per kilog.
Compressed ...	1½ mls.	

(b) Barley and ghee imported into Palestine by the Bagdad-Haifa route shall be exempt from duty.

(c) The Government of Palestine will not, during the period of the *modus vivendi*, alter the duties at present imposed on the following commodities without giving the Iraqi Government six months' notice of their intention to do so:—

Name of commodity.	Present duty.
Animals (live) ... ..	Free.
Eggs ... ..	20 mls. per 100 eggs.
Eggs (without shell) ...	12 per cent.
Fish (fresh) ... ..	12 per cent.
Hides and tanned hides ...	Free.
Meat (other than chicken meat) ...	Free.
Chickens (live) ... ..	Free.
Chickens (frozen) ... ..	12 per cent.
Linseed ... ..	Free.
Cotton ... ..	Free.
Ground nuts ... ..	12 per cent.
Wool ... ..	Free.

3. Motor vehicles using the Bagdad-Haifa route will, subject to reciprocal treatment, enjoy exemption from licence fees and customs duty, subject to observance of the conditions of which a copy has been forwarded to the Government of Palestine by the Director-General of Customs and Excise, Iraq.

4.—(a) The Iraqi Government will continue to maintain the road between Bagdad and Ramadi and the desert road up to the frontier of Transjordan, in a manner adequate to meet transport requirements.

(b) The Government of Palestine will undertake the maintenance of the Jisr-al-Majani-Irbid-Mafrak section as an all-weather road, and will make arrangements for the maintenance of a permanent road (macadamised road), to be constructed through the lava zone lying to the east of Mafrak, which will be suitable and available for transport using the Bagdad-Haifa route.

5. It is agreed that the present *modus vivendi* shall remain in force for an experimental period of three years, to be renewed automatically, unless one year's notice of termination thereof is given by either party.

[E 3603/3272/89]

No. 189.

*Mr. Morgan to Sir John Simon.—(Received June 1.)*

(No. 252.)

HIS Majesty's representative in Turkey presents his compliments to His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and has the honour to transmit herewith copy of despatch No. 45 from His Majesty's acting consul, Mersin, respecting Turco-Syrian relations.

*Angora, May 23, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 189.

*Acting Consul Catton to Mr. Morgan.*

(No. 45.)

Sir,

*Mersin, May 13, 1934.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 30 of the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to report that the Turco-Syrian Permanent Frontier Commission recently assembled at Alexandretta. The Turkish delegation was under the presidency of Akif Bey, Vali of Gazi Antep; the other members of the delegation were Major Kerim, Hilmi and Necati Beys. After the commission had completed its work at Alexandretta the Turkish delegation went to Antioch and it is reported that 20,000 people turned out to welcome them; the streets were strewn with flowers, Turkish flags were flown, the visitors were greeted with cheers of "Long live the Gazi!" and all shops were closed for the occasion.

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The delegation was accommodated at the Tourist Hotel, where Akif Bey received many of the leading local Turks and a crowd outside sang Turkish songs.

2. The Syrian press have published severe articles against the Turkish delegation's visit and the demonstration, some newspapers saying that if the Turks of Antioch want to come under Turkish rule they can go to Angora, but that the Arabs will not yield their town to the Turks and will defend it with all their power. Another newspaper says that the Turkish students who are sent by the Turkish Government to Syrian universities are only sent to spread Turkish propaganda.

3. It is reported that the Arabs have addressed a petition to the French High Commissioner for Syria complaining about the recent demonstration caused by the visit of the Turkish delegation, and asking why the French authorities permitted it to take place.

I have, &c.  
B. J. CATTON.

[E 3848/6/65]

No. 190.

*Consul Mackereth to Sir John Simon.—(Received June 11.)*

(No. 35.)  
Sir,

*Damascus, May 14, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the French High Commissioner in an interview given by him to press reporters in Damascus on the 10th May, dwelt, after a turgid enunciation of economic platitudes, at length on his arrangements to combat the supposed menace of the "encerclement économique" of Syria by Palestine and Iraq in deviating Persian transit traffic.

2. M. de Martel admitted that, notwithstanding the information supplied to the newspapers by the official press bureau, no negotiations, in the full sense of the word, had been begun with Persia on the question of transit trade to that country. He said that Persian interests alone would determine the choice of the Syrian route, out of the four alternatives. In Syria and in the Lebanon arrangements had been made or envisaged to ensure for Persian transit trade the most favourable conditions. He pointed, in this connexion, to the work already proceeding on the laying of rails on the made-up way from Tel Ziwan (East of Nisibin) to the Iraq frontier and on improvement of the Damascus-Bagdad motor track. He referred to the proposed enlargements of the Beirut port, which would, he said, be begun in a fortnight's time.

3. Questioned, the High Commissioner expressed his opinion that the project of bringing the Haifa-Amman-Bagdad route within the realm of realities presented serious technical difficulties not easily to be overcome. In the end, M. de Martel said, it would be to those who gave the best terms in tariffs and other material advantages that Persian and Iraqi merchants would turn.

4. One cannot help but feel that it was a pity that the High Commissioner found it necessary in this way to add fuel to the fire of what is supposed locally to be a fierce Anglo-French rivalry to obtain the Persian transit trade. No doubt he wanted to vaunt his efforts to protect Syrian interests and so curry local favour. This said, it is not easy on the other hand to find an excuse for those interested persons who pretend to voice the views of His Majesty's representatives in Bagdad and Jerusalem in boasting that His Majesty's Government is determined to overcome or anticipate what they describe as French designs on the Persian transit trade. Natural though it is for the Hashimite family to remember with bitterness the French booting of them out of Syria and to seek vengeance by opposing, as they think, French designs, it would be unfortunate if, to enrich the Nathaniels and Debaches of this part of the world by furthering their transport enterprises, an unremunerative road-building and tariff war were to be carried on ostensibly by, yet under the auspices of, Great Britain and France, when the real interests of England and France are not in this matter at variance. It is difficult, looking back into the rather crude politics of the past, to banish a fear that an unnecessary source of irritation to Anglo-French relations is growing out of a pretended altruistic concern for the economic well-being of these Near Eastern countries on the subject of transit trade. In the case of M. de Martel, I am led to wonder

whether there may not be lurking a personal ambition to score a place-making success to prompt his widely-advertised *ripostes* to the alleged machinations of the British to encompass and throttle Syria. The dangers in such ambitions need not at the present time be emphasised.

5. I am sending copies of this despatch to Bagdad, Beirut and Jerusalem.  
I have, &c.

GILBERT MACKERETH.

[E 4205/3272/89]

No. 191.

*Consul Cowan to Sir John Simon.—(Received June 27.)*

(No. 18.)  
Sir,

*Aleppo, May 24, 1934.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 8 of the 3rd April, I have the honour to report that a few weeks ago the Vali of Aintab in Turkey visited this part of Syria, and, among other places, Antioch. He was there given a most enthusiastic welcome, being met by crowds who cheered Turkey and the Gazi. Various accounts are given of reported conversations, and statements which he is supposed to have made on the subject of the union of the sanjak with Turkey, none of which can possibly be believed. No effort was made by the French and Syrian authorities to check this demonstration, which they probably regarded as a safety-valve for popular feeling, as well as an indication of the identity of the ring-leaders in the pro-Turkish movement.

2. A few days later the Aleppo Nationalist leader, Ibrahim Bey Hanano, visited Antioch, and was given an equally enthusiastic reception, although he has comparatively few followers in Antioch. Still later a similar reception was given to General Huntzinger, the new French Commander-in-chief. It is quite obvious that all three receptions were staged, and that their only value is to show the lack of significance of such demonstrations. The crowd will always turn out and cheer anyone they are paid to cheer, as happened a few days ago, when the family of Mr. Henri Hindie, Syrian Minister of Finance and Aleppo Deputy, paid £200 gold to stage a welcome for him on his return to Aleppo from Damascus.

3. From a communication I have received from Mr. Rendel, it is evident that in my despatch under reference I did not sufficiently differentiate between the political feeling in Aleppo and Alexandretta. In Aleppo, especially in the town of Aleppo, there is much discontent with French administration, but Aleppo is a purely Arab town, and Nationalist feeling appears to me to be quietly but steadily increasing. At the same time, there is a feeling of resentment against the Government at Damascus, which has emptied the Aleppo treasury, formerly in a most prosperous condition, without giving natives of Aleppo what they consider their fair share of Government posts. This Nationalist feeling would be stronger were it not that the 90,000 Christians in Aleppo feel that under an independent Mussulman Government they would not be safe, so that, with the exception of a few idealists, very few Christians are members of the Nationalist party. On the other hand, there is no pro-Turkish feeling in Aleppo, in fact, feeling is definitely anti-Turkish, though economic conditions might modify this state of things. As regards sentiment towards the French, the present discontent is merely an example of what Mr. Rendel calls normal opposition to existing authority. Observant travellers inform me that they have remarked a similar state of things in Palestine.

4. In the Sanjak of Alexandretta the situation is different. There, the majority of the population is racially and linguistically Turkish. Many of the educated people even do not know Arabic, and we have recently had two Antioch Deputies in the Syrian Cabinet, whose knowledge of Arabic was defective. There is, therefore, a foundation here on which discontent can build and give a definite orientation to political sentiment. Whereas in Aleppo I should say that popular feeling is more anti-French than Nationalist, and not very strong at that, in the sanjak it is more pro-Turkish than anti-French, although the inhabitants have real justification for being disappointed in French administration. That the sanjak has been seriously neglected by the French cannot be denied, and it is hard to believe that this neglect is not deliberate. Except for



a certain amount of road construction, no productive public works have been executed, and the important question of harbour works has been entirely ignored, in spite of petitions from the inhabitants. Most significant of all is the character of the assistant delegate, M. Durieux, a member of the French consular service, who has been assistant delegate in the Sanjak of Alexandretta for nine years, during which period he has done only what he could not avoid. Other assistant delegates have been changed, but he has remained. Lazy, untrustworthy and untruthful, he is loathed and despised by natives and Europeans alike, his own countrymen included. The retention of such a man in such a position, it seems to me, can only mean that he is carrying out the policy of his Government, that is to say, doing nothing. It is hard to account for such a policy, except on the assumption that France does not expect to retain the sanjak, especially as this policy has only strengthened pro-Turkish sentiment. What puzzles me is what France is going to get in exchange, for she will not give up Alexandretta without very substantial compensation. I do not think that the construction of harbour works at Mersin seriously affects the question, as Turkey needs immediately a seaport in those parts, and it is unlikely that the cession of Alexandretta, if it takes place, will do so for several years to come. In the meantime, unless France changes her policy in the sanjak, pro-Turkish feeling will increase.

5. Mr. Rendel raises the question of whether the natives of the sanjak are in sympathy with the modern Turkish régime. My impression is that they do not consider that any more than the advocates of an Arab empire consider how they would fare under Wahabism. It is almost certain that they would be disappointed, but they will not be convinced of this until they make the experiment.

6. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's High Commissioner, Jerusalem, His Majesty's Ambassador, Bagdad, His Majesty's consular officers at Damascus and Beirut, and to the British vice-consul at Alexandretta.

I have, &c.

N. PATRICK COWAN.

[E 4206/3272/89]

No. 192.

*Consul Cowan to Sir John Simon.—(Received June 27.)*

(No. 19.)

Sir,

*Aleppo, May 25, 1934.*

WITH reference to paragraph 1 of my despatch No. 18 of the 24th May, I have the honour to report that the Kaimakam and the Mayor of Antioch have been dismissed for their share in the demonstration in favour of the Vali of Aintab.

2. It is stated that disciplinary action will also be taken against certain teachers in the principal school at Antioch for pro-Turkish propaganda amongst the pupils. It appears that the books used in the classes were imported from Turkey, and were full of eulogies of the Kemalist régime. These books are now to be replaced by others printed locally.

3. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's High Commissioner, Jerusalem, His Majesty's Ambassador, Bagdad, His Majesty's consular officers at Beirut and Damascus and to the British vice-consul at Alexandretta.

I have, &c.

N. PATRICK COWAN.



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(14717)

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RESPECTING

# EASTERN AFFAIRS

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CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting Eastern Affairs.

PART XXXV.

CHAPTER I.—ARABIA.

[E 4334/715/25]

No. 1.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received July 3.)*

(No. 170. Confidential.)

Sir,

*Jedda, June 2, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith the Jedda report for May 1934.

2. Copies have been distributed as in the list appended to the report for January.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

Enclosure in No. 1.

JEDDA REPORT FOR MAY 1934.

I.—Internal Affairs.

96. IBN SAUD moved into summer quarters at Taif on the 1st-2nd May and has since remained there. His two eldest sons remained in their commands in the south. Fuad Bey Hamza continued to be Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Amir Feisal's absence, but was indisposed for a time, with the result that Sheikh Yusuf Yasin came to Jedda in his stead on the 25th May.

97. No important internal events were reported. The following are the only important economic items:—

- (a) The 2 million rounds of ammunition bought by the Saudi Government from Gellatly, Hankey and Co. (Sudan) (Limited) arrived in the Strick steamship *Gorjistan* on the 18th May (paragraph 48 (c) of March report) and were sent up to Mecca. Payment was completed next day.
- (b) About the same time Gellatly, Hankey and Co. (Sudan) (Limited) secured for Shell the contract for supplying benzine and petroleum to the Government up to next March (paragraph 71 (d) of last report). This disposes for the time being of Mr. Philby's efforts to get a general monopoly of import for Sharqieh (Limited). Payment for the Government supplies is to be made by remission of future customs duty.
- (c) The press announced on the 5th May the formation of an "Arabian Steam Navigation Company" to trade in the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. It is in theory a private trading concern, but it has strong



Government support, the manager being the permanent Under-Secretary in the Finance Ministry, and many prominent official personages having taken shares. The Government have, moreover, guaranteed the company against loss. The promoters recently bought two small vessels in Beirut, formerly under the French flag. One, renamed *El Fath*, arrived in Jedda on the 21st May, and sailed for Qunfidha and Jizan on the 23rd May.

## II.—Frontier Questions and Foreign Relations in Arabia.

98. The fall of Medi on the 26th April was followed by a rapid Saudi advance along the Yemen littoral. Luhayya offered no resistance, and was occupied on the 1st May. Hodeida might have presented more difficulty, but the Yemeni civil administration and military forces abandoned it on the 29th–30th April, leaving it without any Government except that of certain local notables, who organised some emergency measures, including the arming of a motor lorry with machine guns. On the evening of the 30th April, tribesmen and the local riff-raff made hay of the Government stores, the treasury, &c., but private property was respected.

99. On receipt of the first news brought to Kamaran by numerous refugees, H.M.S. *Penzance* proceeded to Hodeida and arrived on the 1st May. The night was disturbed by firing, but nothing serious happened, except a small raid about sunrise, which was repulsed by the local armed lorry. The landing of a party from H.M.S. *Penzance* on the 2nd May, and other measures taken by her commander, as well as a flight round the town by three Royal Air Force aeroplanes from Aden early on the 3rd May, helped to steady the situation pending the arrival of the Saudi troops. Italian ships arrived on the 3rd and 4th May, and also landed parties rather larger than that from H.M.S. *Penzance*, but less welcome. The use of Eritrean natives was criticised.

100. The first Saudi troops reached Hodeida on the 5th May, and the Amir Feisal arrived next morning. Amicable relations were established between him and H.M.S. *Penzance*, but he was less gratified at the presence of Italian ships, and on the 7th May he refused to allow them to bring in a larger party than before, sent to relieve the posts already on shore.

101. The first measures taken by the Saudi authorities to control the situation at Hodeida were eminently satisfactory. They were consolidated by the despatch of the Minister of Finance, with wireless and all the elements of a regular civil administration, to run the town. He arrived on the 11th May. His Majesty's Government reminded the Saudi Government that the setting up of the new administration did not alter their position as military occupants only, but there was no ground otherwise for complaint in regard to the Saudi action. His Majesty's Government had at the outset arranged for two ships, as well as H.M.S. *Penzance*, to proceed to Aden, but it was not necessary to carry out this programme. When H.M.S. *Penzance* left on the 8th May, having re-embarked the post ashore, she was relieved by H.M.S. *Enterprise*. The Italians re-embarked their posts on the 10th May, and although they kept their ships at Hodeida, His Majesty's Government did not consider it necessary to replace H.M.S. *Enterprise* after her departure on the 19th May.

102. Meanwhile, the Saudis had extended their occupation, still welcome to the tribes, as far as Beyt-al-Faqih to the south and places in the foothills. The Yemenis held Zebid and positions in the mountains, but showed during the first half of the month no signs of intending to counter-attack. The military situation on the eastern front remained, however, obscure, as the Saudi heir apparent disappeared completely from the public eye after the expulsion of the Yemenis from Najran on the 21st April. He might have been expected to attack Saada and the official silence regarding him gave rise to rumours that he had sustained a defeat. There is no confirmation of this.

103. Ibn Saud may have had news of the Amir Saud less happy than that from the Yemen littoral. He may have realised that in any case future military developments might be unfavourable, if the Imam were merely conserving his almost unused forces. He may have feared the disapproval of the Arab world, whose self-appointed representatives remained at his side throughout May, if he should attempt to destroy the independence of the Yemen. He may have feared foreign intervention (see below) in the same contingency. Whatever his reasons,

he decided about the 12th May to suspend operations on all fronts and to resume peace negotiations, on the strength of a telegram from the Imam promising immediate compliance with his preliminary conditions, the surrender of the Idrisi, the evacuation of the Beni Malik-Faifa area, and the release of the hostages taken therein.

104. The Imam again failed to keep these promises, but the negotiations were pursued at Taif, and with such success that by the 25th May a complete peace treaty had been signed. It gave Najran to Ibn Saud, and adopted the previous *de facto* frontier as the definite boundary between the two countries elsewhere. There was only one snag. The King did not tighten up his preliminary conditions, as he had been expected to do and as some at least of his advisers hoped he would do. He did not ask for an indemnity or for the at least temporary retention of Hodeida, but he made the entry into force of the treaty conditional on immediate compliance with his preliminary conditions as they stood. Indeed, he let it be known that, if they were not complied with by the 29th May, he would restart hostilities and had made all preparations for that contingency. A resumption of hostilities seemed inevitable on the morning of the 29th May, but a communiqué issued that afternoon announced that the King had decided to prolong the truce "for a few days" in consideration of fresh assurances from the Imam that he was really getting on with the fulfilment of the conditions, but that difficulties of communication had caused delay.

105. The situation was thus uncertain, both from a military and a political point of view, at the end of the month. Meanwhile, the situation at Hodeida was said to have deteriorated, and reports to that effect were confirmed on and after the 25th May, when, as a result of the first disquieting news, H.M.S. *Penzance* went back there. The number of Saudi troops at Hodeida itself had been reduced. The control over the troops as a whole seemed to have relaxed. The men were unpaid and ammunition was short. No very serious incidents occurred in the town, but the troops gave trouble in the countryside, and cases of rape were producing a revulsion of feeling among the tribes. There were, moreover, reports more impressive than before of Yemeni concentrations. The main forces were at Zebid, Menakha and Hajja. There was, it was said, to be no general advance pending orders from the Imam, but other Yemeni forces held positions on an arc extending from east of Medi to Zebid. There was already frequent skirmishing. On the 31st May the Yemenis from Hajja were said to be threatening Zohra, 20 miles east of Luhayya, and another 1,000 men were said to have arrived at Zebid. It looked as though the Imam's game had been to play once more for time, and as though the prolongation of the truce might no longer rest with Ibn Saud.

106. Gossip has killed off various high personages, the reports of whose death have proved to be much exaggerated. It took many days to explode the rumour, which started in Hodeida on the 1st or 2nd May, that the Imam was dead. His eldest son was another victim, though he seems to be perfectly fit, and to be the heart and soul of the war party in the Yemen. The Amir Saud has also been reported dead or at any rate wounded.

107. The Saudi Government replied on the 13th May to the British "blue line" note mentioned in paragraph 77 of the last report. They were unwilling to accept the Anglo-Turkish Conventions of 1913 and 1914 as determining the legal position. They asserted no definite views as to what they themselves regard as the frontier, but expressed readiness to discuss the subject at any time. The British authorities concerned carried out, without incident, aerial reconnaissances, with naval support, round the coasts of Qatar and across the base of the peninsula, which were completed on the 9th May.

108. Careful enquiry in Transjordan has revealed no foundation for the report (paragraph 79 of last report) that Hamid-bin-Rifada's son is organising an anti-Saudi movement.

## III.—Relations with Powers outside Arabia.

109. The Saudi Government showed great anxiety during the earlier part of the month to ascertain the attitude of His Majesty's Government towards the Yemen situation, not only as regards its neutral character, which was clearly affirmed, but also with special reference to His Majesty's Government's views as to the probability of Italian intervention and the position they would take up



if such intervention took place. His Majesty's Minister was able to allay their fears to some extent and to head them off formal enquiries as to what His Majesty's Government might do in purely hypothetical contingencies, all the more hypothetical as it was uncertain how far Ibn Saud himself meant to go in the direction of trying to destroy the Imam.

110. Direct approaches by the Saudi Government to the Italians produced fairly satisfactory, if not wholly convincing, results. The Italian Chargé d'Affaires in Jedda made a comforting communication to Fuad Bey Hamza on the 12th May, and its effect was enhanced by friendly conversations between the Chargé d'Affaires and Sheikh Yusuf Yasin on the 25th-26th May. The fact remains that the Saudi Government are very suspicious of Italy. They might be more so, if they knew that the Italians, while doing only a little more than His Majesty's Government at Hodeida, have apparently sent at least one ship and some forces to Mokha, although precise information in regard to their action there is not available in Jedda. One particular ground of suspicion has been the anxiety of the Italians to have an agent on shore at Hodeida.

111. The Saudi Government have vaguer fears regarding France and possibly Soviet Russia. The French also sent a sloop to Hodeida, the upshot of foreign naval activity at the end of the month being that there was one British sloop, one Italian sloop and a destroyer, and one French sloop. His Majesty's Government would have liked to promote the departure of all foreign warships, subject to there being no ground for anticipating danger to foreign interests. The realisation of this ideal has, however, been made more difficult by the latest developments described above.

#### IV.—Miscellaneous.

112. The climate of Jedda displayed its worst features during May, the combination of heat and damp being most trying. The strain imposed on the Legation staff by the Saudi-Yemen crisis was all the more severe, especially during the first half of the month.

113. A French cruiser, the *Amiral Charnel*, having on board Vice-Admiral Joubert, visited Jedda from the 19th to 21st May.

114. A French journalist, M. Gaston Berthey, representing the *Journal des Débats* and the *Journal*, arrived in Jedda on the 13th May, and went on to Hodeida on or about the 16th May. An Egyptian journalist named Mahmoud Azmy, who has connexions in London and Paris as well as Cairo, and who purports to represent the *Daily Express*, arrived the same day, but went to Taif on the 14th. The former French consul in Jedda, Major Ibrahim Depui, has also been floating round in the Hejaz.

115. The dispersal of the pilgrimage continued normally, and by the end of the month was nearly complete. The Legation has had to repatriate an unusually large number of Indian destitutes, and is threatened with a formidable problem in connexion with the repatriation of Africans, whose numbers have been steadily growing in Mecca and Jedda in recent years, and for whom there is no longer adequate employment. The problem has been aggravated by the consequences of the fire mentioned in paragraph 90 of the last report, and by the sudden enforcement in Mecca of the regulation mentioned in paragraph 144 of the report for July 1933.

116. The position as regards the manumission of slaves during May was as follows:—

On hand at the beginning of the month: 4 males, 3 females, 2 children.  
Took refuge in May: 1 male.  
Manumitted in May and repatriated: 3 males, 1 female, 1 child.  
Locally manumitted: Nil.  
On hand at the end of the month: 2 males, 2 females, 1 child.

117. The Royal slave mentioned in paragraph 94 of the last report was duly manumitted by the Acting Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior on behalf of his father the King, and was embarked for Jibuti, via Aden, under the auspices of the Legation on the 17th May. The case mentioned in paragraph 95 of the last report is still unsettled.

[E 4341/279/91]

No. 2.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received July 3.)*

(No. 187.)

HIS Majesty's Minister at Jedda presents his compliments to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and has the honour to transmit to him copy of his note of the 15th June to the Acting Saudi Minister for Foreign Affairs respecting the Qatar boundaries.

Jedda, June 15, 1934.

Enclosure in No. 2.

*Sir A. Ryan to Acting Saudi Minister for Foreign Affairs.*

Your Excellency,  
(After compliments.)

Jedda, June 15, 1934.

I HAVE the honour to state that I duly conveyed to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom the contents of your Excellency's note of the 29th Muharram, 1353 (13th May, 1934), relative to boundaries in Eastern Arabia. Having carefully considered the contents of your note and the reports which I had already addressed to them regarding my conversation with your Excellency on the 2nd May, my Government have instructed me to inform the Saudi Government of their inability to admit that events since the conclusion of the Anglo-Turkish Conventions of 1913 and 1914 have modified the legal position defined in my note of the 28th April. They cannot but regard that position as binding on the Saudi Government and as being only susceptible of alteration by agreement between that Government and themselves. So far as the boundaries now in question are concerned, they do not consider that any developments in Arabia since 1914 have been such as to render inappropriate to present circumstances the blue line laid down in the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1913 and duly confirmed by the convention of 1914.

With highest respects,  
ANDREW RYAN.

[E 4451/279/91]

No. 3.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received July 10.)*

(No. 201.)

Sir,

Jedda, June 27, 1934.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 149 of the 23rd June, I have the honour to enclose a translation of the note and memorandum addressed to me by the Saudi Government on the 20th June regarding the eastern frontiers of Saudi Arabia. Although this translation has been made with great care, I consider it advisable, in view of the unusual importance of the note, to send you copies of the original Arabic texts. I may say that Fuad Bey Hamza was good enough to read the translation in the form it assumed after my conversation with him on the 22nd June, on the distinct understanding that he was not thereby making himself responsible for the English text, and had only two alterations to suggest when we met again next day. The first was purely verbal. The second related to the adjective before "frontier line" in the last phrase of paragraph 2 of the note. He suggested that it might be rendered "existing" or *de facto*, but I think that the sense he was aiming at is better expressed by "actual."

2. My conversation with Fuad Bey on the 22nd June was long and detailed. I must not attempt to reproduce the whole of what passed, but will give the gist in the following paragraphs.

3. I suggested to Fuad Bey that, while the second sentence of paragraph 2 of his note professed to be based on a principle which His Majesty's Government had stated, the principle on which he relied was different, or rather more comprehensive. His Majesty's Government considered that an agreed frontier existed and had said that this could not be altered without a further agreement between



the parties and/or their successors in title. The Saudi Government held that no valid agreement existed and that a new agreement was necessary. I did not question their right to assert this view, but I did not wish to let pass what looked like a distortion of the language used by me under your instructions. Fuad Bey's first reaction showed that he thought I was trying to entrap him in some way. He afterwards seemed to see my point and I did not pursue the matter, as it was only important to make my first point clear.

4. As you will have seen from my telegram under reference, I attached more importance to the use of the plural "Governments concerned" in the same sentence. I did not state very explicitly to Fuad Bey what was in my mind, namely, that the word might refer to the Government of Qatar and the Trucial Sheikdoms, to the exclusion of His Majesty's Government, but I said enough to elicit from Fuad Bey an assurance that the plural was used merely for the purpose of a statement of principles governing the position of the Saudi Government *vis-à-vis* other Governments generally.

5. I drew Fuad Bey's attention to the words "whatever may have then been the real position of the British Government" in paragraph 1 of his memorandum. I asked whether they were meant to throw doubt on the *locus standi* in 1913-14 of His Majesty's Government, who had a historic position in regard to that part of Arabia. Fuad Bey took refuge in the following phrase: "regarding which we do not wish to enter into discussion now." I suggested that, if the Saudi Government were reserving the right to call the position of His Majesty's Government in question, they would do well to take their courage in both hands and do it forthwith. My object in this was to emphasise the doctrine that His Majesty's Government have a sphere of influence in Eastern Arabia, in which they claim historical and legal rights.

6. Fuad Bey was shocked to find a slip in the penultimate sentence of paragraph 1 of his memorandum, where the European equivalent of the date of Ibn Saud's occupation of Hasa had been given as the 13th April, 1911. Upon his correcting this year to 1913, I asked whether Ibn Saud had not shortly after made a treaty with the Turks whereby he recognised Ottoman sovereignty and accepted the position of a Turkish provincial Governor. I suggested, expressly as from myself, that it might interest His Majesty's Government to see a copy of this document. Fuad Bey intimated vaguely that this might be arranged, but said that the treaty had never been ratified or come into force. He did not question my description of it and added spontaneously that there had been a secret firman, of which he himself had never been able to get hold. I have no clear recollection of what information regarding the arrangements was received from Turkish sources at the time, but you will doubtless consult the records of the period, in view of the Saudi Government's definite contention that Ibn Saud re-established a legitimate sovereignty over Hasa over three months before the signature of the Anglo-Turkish convention of 1913 and thereafter retained it.

7. I was not clear as to whether the Anglo-Saudi treaty of the 16th December, 1915, was concluded in English or Arabic. Fuad Bey was not certain whether an English text had been signed, but said that there was certainly a signed Arabic text. Such records as I possess tend to confirm this and lead me to suppose that it was the only version. I have therefore caused the Arabic text of the part of article 1 which Fuad Bey quotes in paragraph 2 of his memorandum to be translated from the Arabic. The version does not differ materially from the English translation usually used, but the Arabic word rendered "dependencies" in the latter implies perhaps rather more in the way of geographical continuation, and the word rendered "territories" represents the ordinary Arabic word for boundaries. Fuad Bey attached importance to the word corresponding to "categorically" in the enclosed version, which does not appear in the usual English translation.

8. I had some difficulty in understanding paragraph 3 of Fuad Bey's memorandum. His oral explanation made it clear that the first two sentences contrasted two distinct things, viz., the limits of the sovereignty of the Sheikh of Qatar as "known among the Arab tribes," i.e., a traditional boundary between the places of settled habitation like Doha and their immediate surround and the unsettled portions of the peninsula; and a *de facto* boundary between the "Hajrat" or stony portion of the peninsula as a whole and the sandy desert stretching up to the south of the peninsula. His references to Karaana suggested that he supposed it to lie on this *de facto* boundary and to be further south than

its position in the maps. We had not before us, however, any map showing it and I did not wish to press Fuad Bey as to his precise conception of the boundary. It is a possible surmise that the secret understanding which is supposed to exist between the Sheikh of Qatar and Ibn Saud establishes a *de facto* boundary running from near Salwa to Karaana and beyond. Fuad Bey admitted that the words in the third sentence of this paragraph, which read "alteration of the known frontier or even the existing one," would be more logical if he had said "... of the existing frontier or even the known one."

9. I have elaborated the points in the preceding paragraph because it was clear to me that Ibn Saud attaches rather special importance to the retention of Salwa and such Ikhwan settlements as exist in the neighbouring country to the east and south-east.

10. I was not clear as to whether the words Amirs in the last sentence of the memorandum referred to the Trucial Sheikhs or to local personages who accepted Saudi sovereignty. Fuad Bey said that it referred to the sheikhs of the various Principalities on the coast. The thread running through all his argument, though it was not revealed in any express language and he did not contest my repeated use of the words "British sphere of influence," was that the territories of Ibn Saud and of the coastal rulers must necessarily be *conterminous*. I suggested, though in a lighter vein, that it might be interesting to know whether an account had been kept of Zakat levied beyond the blue line, with a view to a claim for reimbursement.

11. I need add little to what I have said in my telegram under reference regarding two other important points in the conversation, namely, Fuad Bey's complaints that His Majesty's Government had not referred to the blue line in 1915 or in 1927 and his personal suggestion for a compromise. I confess that I myself have some difficulty in dismissing as negligible the Saudi argument from the treaty of 1915 (which has been uncomfortably present in my mind since I sent you my telegram No. 40 of the 21st March) when taken in conjunction with known facts regarding the extension of the rule of Ibn Saud's "fathers" in their heyday and the fact that his new influence has extended far to the east of the blue line. I am not even now sure as to the situation of fact in regard to Baraimi, a point to which I adverted in my telegram No. 47 of the 30th March.

12. I will not overload this despatch by discussing the alleged analogy between the Koweit settlement of 1922 and the sort of settlement now suggested by the Saudi Government. Fuad Bey did not revert to this subject on the 20th June, but I still think that the argument used by the Saudi Government will in due course call for a more elaborate refutation than that outlined in your telegram No. 116 of the 13th June.

13. I am sending copies of this despatch and its enclosures to his Excellency the Viceroy of India, Foreign and Political Department, Simla, and to the Honourable the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

Enclosure in No. 3.

*Fuad Bey Hamza to Sir A. Ryan.*

*Ministry for Foreign Affairs,  
Taif, Rabi-al-Awwal 8, 1353.  
(June 20, 1934.)*

(Translation.)  
Your Excellency,  
(After Compliments.)

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Excellency's note of the 3rd Rabi-al-Awwal, 1353 (the 15th June), regarding the view of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom on the contents of my previous note to your Excellency about the true position of the frontier line between certain of His Majesty's dominions and certain neighbouring Arab territories in Eastern and Southern Arabia.

The Government of His Majesty have studied what is contained in your note under reference and their attention has been especially drawn to your mention of your Government's point of view in regard to the legal aspect of the case. As regards this point, I regret that I am obliged to state that the Government



of His Majesty adhere to the principle which you referred to in your note, namely, that any frontier agreement must be fully agreed upon between them and the Governments concerned, and cannot admit that any frontier line can be laid down by one party. They therefore affirm their insistence upon their position, which I have already explained to your Excellency in my note of the 29th Muharram, 1353 (the 13th May), namely, that they do not regard the line you referred to as correctly describing the true frontier line, from the points of view of fact and law, between them and the neighbouring Arab territories; and declare their entire readiness to (come to a) mutual understanding, in all good faith and sincerity, in respect of the actual frontier line, which shall secure the interest and the advantage of all the Arab countries concerned.

And, desiring to explain all the reasons on which the Government of His Majesty base their attitude, I forward to you with this my note a statement which I hope will be of use during the study of the position.

With highest respects,  
FUAD HAMZA.

*Statement of the Present Position of the Frontiers between the Saudi Arab Kingdom and the Neighbouring Arab Territory to the East and South.*

1. The Government of His Majesty, for reasons which are, in their view, of substantial importance, cannot admit that the frontier line called "the blue line," which was specified in the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1913 and confirmed in the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1914, was agreed upon between Governments having proper authority and a true *locus standi*, whatever may have then been the real position of the British Government—regarding which we do not wish to enter into discussion now; for the position of the Ottoman Government at that time was clear and evident, in that they did not possess the right to determine the destiny of the countries which had concluded agreements in this respect with the British Government; for it is clear and evident that the authority of the Ottoman Government over the territories under discussion, while it did not extend beyond the inhabited towns and villages and was not exercised outside them, ceased, in fact, as soon as His Majesty the King recovered the territories of his ancestors and established his legal authority in them, by occupying Al Hasa on the 5th Jumad-al-Ula, 1331 (corresponding to the 13th April, 1913). Every agreement made by the Ottoman Government in respect of these territories after the above-mentioned date is void, as emanating from a Government having no concern with them.

2. Article 1 of the treaty concluded between His Majesty the King and the British Government on the 18th Safar, 1334 (corresponding to the 16th December, 1915), states as follows:—

"The great British Government categorically recognise and acknowledge that Nejd and Hasa and Qatif and Jubail, and their vicinities and boundaries (or limits) which shall subsequently be discussed and determined and their ports on the shores of the Persian Gulf, belong to (lit. 'are of') the dominions of Ibn Saud and to the dominions of his ancestors who came before him. They hereby recognise (lit. 'describe') the said Ibn Saud as an independent ruler over the above-mentioned dominions and absolute Chief of their tribes, &c."

From perusal of this article, the following facts are clear:—

- (a) The actual frontier line was not definitely laid down, but it was agreed that it should subsequently be fixed.
- (b) The British Government acknowledged (the right of) His Majesty the King to the dominions of his ancestors.
- (c) They also acknowledged his right to all the tribes belonging to those dominions.
- (d) Their agreement to the Uqayr Protocol, in which was laid down as the frontier between Nejd and Koweit a line other than that defined in the Anglo-Turkish Convention, thereby recognised the inappropriateness of that line to serve as a true and acceptable basis for the frontiers between His Majesty's dominions and the other neighbouring countries.

3. It is known among the Arab tribes that the confines (frontiers) of Qatar are the confines (frontiers) of the inhabited towns and villages, and that at those points the confines (frontiers) of the countries generally known to form part of His Majesty's dominions end. In the case of the existing limits (same word) between His Majesty's dominions and Qatar, these end in the Hajrat of Qatar. The Government of His Majesty only contemplate an alteration of the known frontier, or even the existing one, by means of a straightforward (lit. "chaste") agreement which they wish for and would welcome by opening the door for its attainment.

4. All the tribes living between the coastal towns of Qatar and the coast of Oman and the Hadhremaut belong to the Saudi Arab Kingdom, are entirely submissive to the laws of the country, pay Zakat, and are obedient to the calls of the Government in the time of war (jihad), &c. This situation of fact and the authority of the Government of His Majesty the King over them meet with no opposition at any time on the part of the Amirs of those coasts; they (the Government) have considered, and still consider, that this is one of the rights of His Majesty, to which there can be no opposition.

Rabi-al-Awwal 8, 1353.  
(June 20, 1934.)

[E 4452/79/25]

No. 4.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received July 10.)*

(No. 202.)  
Sir,

Jedda, June 27, 1934.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 151 of the 24th June, I have the honour to enclose herewith an annotated summary of the recent treaty between Saudi Arabia and the Yemen. It will be some little time before I can send you a full translation, as it is a lengthy and rather difficult document and my chief interpreter is absent on local sick leave. I have prepared the summary from a rough translation made by Mr. Furlonge with the assistance of the second interpreter. I am anxious that it should reach you as soon as possible, in view of the exaggerated statements which have appeared in the press suggesting that the two countries have concluded an agreement tantamount to an alliance. I understand that Mr. Philby has gone even further and reported to the *Daily Mail* that Ibn Saud has established a veiled protectorate over the Yemen.

2. Despite many obvious defects, the treaty may be regarded as a fairly workmanlike document. It is in European form and the pious formulæ, which have done so much to obscure Saudi-Yemen relations in the past, have been reduced to a minimum. It would be hard to say whether article 4, which determines the frontier, is sufficiently precise to obviate future quarrels, but it at least allocates the principal disputed areas. It is perhaps rather a pity that even now certain points should be referred back to the *status quo* before April 1933 and to Ibn Saud's arbitral award of December 1931. On the whole, however, it would probably have been impossible to do much better in dealing with regions of which there are no accurate maps and where tribal considerations are more important than geography.

3. There is nothing on the face of the treaty to suggest that it has been concluded on other than equal terms. It is significant in this connexion that the Imam figures in it as "His Majesty the King of the Yemen," a title never given to him in Saudi official language before this treaty was drawn up. Apart from the preliminary conditions on which Ibn Saud insisted to the last, there is no single provision which is not based on the strictest reciprocity. There is no provision for an indemnity and, *pace* Mr. Philby, no present evidence that Ibn Saud has got one by some special arrangement outside the published texts. What it comes to is that he has, at any rate for twenty years, established his title to both parts of Asir and secured Najran; and for these undoubtedly solid gains he has paid a longish price in military expenditure and a certain price in men.

4. Whether the treaty can be regarded as in any sense an alliance is a more difficult question. I myself am inclined to think that it amounts to little or nothing of the kind. The peculiar position of the parties as the only two really independent rulers in Arabia, both ardent xenophobes, has driven them into impressive affirmations of their Moslem and Arab solidarity. In this matter, if



no other, the mission of Arab mediators may have made themselves felt. My new Iraqi colleague goes so far as to attribute the recurrent phrase about brotherhood to the inspiration of the Amir Shakib Arslan, with whom it is a favourite catchword. Great play is made with the doctrine that the people of the two "countries," which are carefully distinguished, are one "nation," but the word which, for the want of a better equivalent, has been translated "nation" is not used so as to imply any political unity. It refers rather to that ideal unity of Moslems and Arabs which it is the present fashion to acclaim.

5. When all is said and done there is little to suggest a real pooling of interests, except articles 15 and 17. The former of these is not very explicit. The latter contains a singular definition of neutrality, compounded, I think, of the three ideas that neutrality in the European sense is a duty, that a brother's a brother for a' that, and that it is just as well none the less to tie a brother up in the knots of a formal understanding if you should need to trust to his neutrality. I am not ignoring the reference in article 19 to the possibility of an ultimate customs union, but that need not, I think, be taken very seriously at present.

6. The only other point to which I need advert is the reference to secrecy in the first pair of annexed letters. The Saudi letter suggests that the treaty should be kept secret, especially the part relative to the frontiers, for fear of disturbances, more particularly in the coastal region. It might have been supposed that this reason would operate until the Saudi evacuation had been complete, but Ibn Saud and his Government seem to have been content in the end to delay publication only until their preliminary conditions had been fulfilled and the coming into force of the treaty was assured.

7. I am sending copies of this despatch and enclosures to His Majesty's Ambassador, Rome, His Majesty's Chief Commissioner, Aden, the Hon. the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire, his Excellency the High Commissioner for Palestine, Jerusalem, His Majesty's Ambassador, Bagdad, and His Majesty's High Commissioner, Ramleh.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

#### Enclosure in No. 4.

*Annotated Summary of the Saudi-Yemen Peace Treaty concluded at Taif on the 6th Safar, 1353 (equivalent to the 20th May, 1934, but no European date is given).*

*Heading.*—"Treaty of Islamic Friendship and Arab Brotherhood between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Kingdom of the Yemen."

*Preamble.*—Appointment of plenipotentiaries, the Amir Khalid-bin-Abdul-Aziz for Ibn Saud and Abdullah-bin-Ahmed-al-Wazir for the Imam, to conclude a treaty as described in the heading in order to realise the objects stated.

*NOTE.*—Among the objects are the termination of the state of war; "uniting the word of the Moslem Arab nation, raising its position, and maintaining its prestige and independence"; and the creation of "a united front against eventualities and a solid structure to preserve the security of the Arab Peninsula."

Article 1. State of war ends as from the date of signature of the treaty; perpetual peace and firm and everlasting Moslem Arab brotherhood. Disputes to be settled in spirit of friendship and all relations to be governed by the spirit of the same brotherhood. God called upon to witness the good intentions of the parties. Prayer for His blessing.

Art. 2. Mutual recognition by each party of the complete independence and sovereignty of the other and his lawful successors. Abandonment of past claims by either to territory on the other side of the frontier now established.

*NOTE.*—Express mention is made in the renunciation clause of possible claims by Ibn Saud to territory formerly possessed by the Idrisis or others in what is now recognised as Yemeni, and claims by the Imam on grounds of Yemen unity or otherwise in respect of territory formerly possessed by the Idrisis or the Beni Aidh or of Najran and the Yam country.

Art. 3. Neither party to concede to the other less than he concedes to any third party. Neither bound to concede more to the other than he gets in return.

*NOTE.*—Apparently intended as a most-favoured-nation clause.

Art. 4. Description of agreed frontier.

*NOTE.*—This long and elaborate clause is very difficult to follow owing to the lack of accurate maps and the wealth of unfamiliar geographical and tribal names. It proceeds on the double plan of indicating the general lie of the frontier line and then naming places and tribes which fall on one or the other side. The line runs east from the coast to the mountains of Tihamat Asir; then bends north to the north-westerly limit of the Beni Juma; then east to the boundaries of Nuqaa and Waar belonging to the Waila tribe and the boundaries of the Yam; then to Madhiq Marwan and the Rifada pass; then east to the boundary between tribes of the stock of Hamdan-bin-Zeyd, Waila, &c., and the Yam. The sketch enclosed in Chancery letter of the 12th June to the Eastern Department seems to correspond fairly well with this definition, if the line be continued more or less east between Najran and the Beni Wail, though it is doubtless very inaccurate in detail.

Art. 5. No fortifications to be erected within 5 kilom. of the frontier.

Art. 6. Occupying forces of each party to be withdrawn forthwith from the territory of the other and protection to be afforded to the inhabitants and troops.

Art. 7. Each party to restrain his people from hostile action against those of the other and to prevent raiding. Captured property to be restored in accordance with legal investigation after the ratification of the treaty; legal damages to be guaranteed in cases of murder, &c., and hostile acts to be punished upon proof of them. This provision to operate pending a further agreement on the mode of assessing and investigating claims.

Art. 8. Parties not to resort to force for settlement of disputes arising between them under this treaty or otherwise. Failing settlement by friendly negotiations, such disputes shall be referred to arbitration to be conducted in accordance with the annexed agreement, which will be deemed an integral part of the treaty.

Art. 9. Each party to prevent action or preparations in his territory directed against the other party and to take action defined in this article against their authors on receipt of a written demand.

*NOTE.*—The action to be taken is defined under three heads according to whether the persons involved are subjects of the party applied to, of the applicant party or of a third party. The provisions are not unlike those laid down in the corresponding article of the Saudi-Transjordan treaty of July 1933.

Art. 10. Fugitives from the jurisdiction of either party not to be admitted by the other. Entrance to be prevented and persons circumventing measures to prevent it to be disarmed, arrested and surrendered; or if they cannot be arrested to be driven back to the country to which they belong.

Art. 11. Governors and officials of either party to be prevented from interfering with the subjects of the other. Measures to be taken to obviate disturbance or misunderstanding as a result of such action.

Art. 12. People of areas assigned to each party under this treaty to be the subjects of that party. Neither party to accept as his subjects the subjects of the other party without the latter's consent. Subjects of either party in the territory of the other to be dealt with in accordance with the local law.

Art. 13. Amnesty to be granted by each party to the subjects of the other residing in his territory; to his own subjects who have taken refuge with or joined the other party, both as regards crimes and as regards property taken from the time of their doing so to the time of their return. In case of doubt on the part of either party as to the fulfilment of this clause, he may call upon the other party to convoke a meeting of the representatives who have signed this treaty, failing



either of whom he may be replaced by a person having stated qualifications. Their decision to be binding.

NOTE.—The first sentence of this is very loose. The main object of the whole article appears to be to give the maximum of protection to tribesmen and others who have sided with the other party in territory now reverting to one or the other party.

Art. 14. Property of persons benefiting by the amnesty to be restored to them on their return to their country or to their heirs. Goods of the subjects of either party not to be sequestered by the other party.

Art. 15. Neither party to meddle with or come to any agreement with any third party, whether an individual, a group of persons or a Government in any manner prejudicial to the interests of the other party.

NOTE.—The general sense of the original is fairly clear, but the text requires further scrutiny.

Art. 16. The parties, who are bound by the ties of Islamic brotherhood and Arab origin, declare that their nations are one nation, that they wish no one evil and that they will endeavour to promote the interests of their nation in tranquillity and seek the good of their countries and their nation, without intending enmity to any nation whatsoever.

NOTE.—See covering despatch.

Art. 17. In the event of external aggression against the country of either party, the other shall,

- (i) Observe complete neutrality secretly and publicly.
- (ii) Practice all "possible moral and spiritual co-operation."
- (iii) Negotiate with the other party with a view to discovering the means of guaranteeing the security of the country of such other party and preventing harm thereto and refraining from any action which might be interpreted as contributing assistance to the external enemy.

NOTE.—See covering despatch.

Art. 18. Measures to be taken by each party in the event of rebellion or internal hostilities in the country of the other.

NOTE.—These are stated under four heads covering measures to prevent the abuse of the territory, to refuse asylum to the rebels, to prevent supplies from reaching them, &c.

Art. 19. Both parties to collaborate as regards postal and telegraphic communication, economic matters, &c., and to negotiate a customs agreement.

NOTE.—The article expressly contemplates an agreement between the parties to safeguard their interests either by an unification of customs duties or by special regulations, but each retains freedom of action pending the conclusion of the agreement.

Art. 20. Representatives abroad of either party to represent the other party, if the latter so wishes. Representatives of both parties in the same place abroad to collaborate in order to secure unity of policy and promote the interests of both countries which are one nation. Neither party restricted in its freedom of action by this article.

Art. 21. Abrogation of treaty of the 15th December, 1931.

Art. 22. Ratifications to be exchanged as soon as possible, whereupon the treaty will come into force forthwith, saving the provision in article 1 regarding the termination of the state of war. The treaty shall remain in force for twenty lunar years and may be amended or renewed during the six months preceding its expiry, failing which it shall remain in force for six months from notification of the wish of either party to alter it.

Art. 23. Treaty to be called the Treaty of Taif. Drawn up in two copies in the noble Arabic language.

*Conclusion.*—Normal except it mentions Jedda as the place of signature. This is probably a slip of the draughtsman or the printers, as the Saudi Government certainly did not on this occasion apply their general principle that Jedda is the only real suitable place for diplomatic acts.

*Protocol on Arbitration.*—This consists of a preamble and five articles providing for arbitration by a board to consist of an equal number of persons nominated by each side and a president to be chosen by agreement, or failing agreement by ballot between agreed candidates, or failing agreement on a list by further negotiation.

*Annexed Letters.*—There are three pairs of letters recording agreement on the following subjects:—

- (a) The Saudi stipulation that the treaty shall not come into force pending fulfilment of Ibn Saud's preliminary conditions in regard to the surrender of the Idrisis, the evacuation of the mountain area and the release of the hostages. The treaty is to be kept secret, especially as regards frontiers (see covering despatch).
- (b) Arrangements in regard to the Idrisis, with special reference to Abdul Wahhab, Sharifs and other supporters of the Idrisis to be received by Ibn Saud and well treated if they elect to follow the Idrisis into his territory, but otherwise to be expelled from the Yemen.
- (c) Movements of subjects between the territories of the two parties.

[E 4624/2792/25]

No. 5.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received July 18.)*

(No. 204. Confidential.)

*Jedda, July 2, 1934.*

Sir,  
YOU are aware that at various times during the past three years attention has been directed to the possibility of gold being discovered in the Hejaz in commercially exploitable quantities. Interest in the subject has been stimulated principally by the activities of Mr. K. S. Twitchell, a United States citizen, who has made several stays in the country, at first as an expert employed by the Saudi Government for various surveys, &c., and later as a private person with commercial interests. In February of last year he was closely associated with Mr. Hamilton, the representative sent here by the Standard Oil Company of California to negotiate the Hasa Oil Concession, and it was understood at that time that he had interested one or more American concerns, whom he would himself represent, in other mining enterprises, and more particularly gold-mining (see, *inter alia*, paragraph 15 (c) of the Jedda report for February 1933). His earlier explorations had disclosed the existence of gold, though not necessarily in important quantities, in various places, notably the North-Western Hejaz, and two districts not far from Taif and Medina respectively. Some or all of these places are known historically as sources of gold in ancient times.

2. For some time after February 1933 little more was heard of gold. Nothing appears to have come of Mr. Twitchell's efforts to interest the American concerns more actively. He pursued his own activities, however, and the continued interest of the Saudi Government in the subject was demonstrated by the enquiry regarding gold-mining legislation in the British Empire, which I reported in my despatch No. 372 of the 20th December last.

3. Mr. Twitchell has now succeeded in obtaining the backing of what appear to be important interests in the United Kingdom. He returned to Jedda on the 27th June as representative of the recently formed "Saudi Arabia Mining Syndicate (Limited)," which, it would appear from the press, has been registered in England as a private company with a capital of £20,000 in £1 shares. I understand from Mr. Twitchell that the controlling interest in this new concern is that of the Anglo-Oriental and General Investment Trust, one of whose directors is on the board of the syndicate, but that the composition of the syndicate as a whole is unusually varied. Among the other persons and firms interested are a Mr. McDermott and Messrs. Gellatly, Hankey and Co. (Limited), whose Jedda manager confirms information from other sources regarding their participation on a small scale.



4. On this occasion Mr. Twitchell appears to be entirely independent of the Standard Oil Company of California. He or they, or both, have indeed been at pains to mark the dissociation. It would have been natural for him to stay in Jedda with his only compatriot, the representative of the California Arabian Standard Oil Company, but he has instead taken up his quarters in the local hotel. I believe him to be also entirely disconnected with Mr. Philby's firm, Sharqieh (Limited), who have in the past had some interest in gold and who still, I believe, control that old-established but now inert concern, Midian (Limited). As regards his connexions in London, I gather that he explored the possibility of working with the Hejaz Development Corporation (Limited) (see the correspondence ending with my despatch No. 67 of the 13th March), but was not impressed by the interests represented in that concern. I think that he regards the Arabian Development Syndicate, in which M. Yélibi and the Eastern and General Syndicate (Limited) are interested, as potential rivals, but of this I am not sure.

5. I gather that Mr. Twitchell's immediate objective is to treat with the Saudi Government for prospecting rights in any areas likely to produce gold, in the hope of eventually obtaining concessions to be worked by subsidiary companies.

6. It may be worth adding that Mr. Twitchell has acquired some interest in certain gold-mining propositions in the Sudan. In this area he is associated with Messrs. Foley, Bishop and Clark, who appear to have formed, or to be forming, a company to handle three propositions at places called (?) Wadi Aw, (?) Makraf, and a third of the name of which I am even less certain. They are not interested in the proposition at Obeit, which is being handled by another British subject independently.

7. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

[E 4626/79/25]

No. 6.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received July 18.)*

(No. 209.)

Sir,

Jedda, July 3, 1934.

SINCE I wrote my despatch No. 194 of the 19th June the only major developments in connexion with the Saudi-Yemen situation, as seen from Jedda, have been the exchange of ratifications of the peace treaty on the 22nd June, its publication next day, and the first stages of the Saudi evacuation of the Yemen littoral. I dealt fully with the peace treaty in my despatch No. 202 of the 27th June, and the commanding officers of the Red Sea sloops have kept His Majesty's Government fully informed of the progress of the evacuation. I will, therefore, confine this despatch to recording a few items of information not important enough to telegraph.

2. Once the evacuation of the Yemen became certain, the Saudi Government appeared to lose all interest in the proceedings of the foreign warships at Hudeida. I therefore abandoned some little time ago any attempt to keep them advised by formal notification of the arrivals and departures of the Red Sea sloops.

3. Two of the three principal Idrisis, viz., Seyyids Hasan and Abdul Aziz, arrived in Mecca on the 25th June, having been brought overland from the Yemen. They seem to have passed through or close to Jedda, but attracted little attention here. It is not clear that Abdul Wahhab-al-Idrisi was actually surrendered before the 22nd June. Anyhow, the fact of his surrender was not definitely made known until it was mentioned, without any indication of the date, in the communiqué of the 27th June, a copy of which was enclosed in my printed despatch No. 202 of the 29th June. The *Umm-al-Qura* of the 29th June published telegrams exchanged between him and the King on the 26th June. The Seyyid addressed the King as his father and besought his forgiveness. The King's reply magnanimously minimised the regrettable past and assured Abdul Wahhab of his regard for all Arabs and the Idrisi family in particular.

4. It seems probable that the Idrisis will be removed in due course to Riyadh and interned there in the same easy conditions as other political personages of high lineage like Ali Idrisi and the Beni Aidh.

5. The *Umm-al-Qura* of the 29th June, already referred to, published also telegrams of congratulation exchanged between Ibn Saud and the Imam. Their only feature of interest is that Ibn Saud seems to have telegraphed on the 19th June, immediately on hearing that the Imam had signed his ratification, whereas the Imam postponed his reply until the day after the ratifications had been exchanged. A later paper, the *Saut-al-Hijaz* of the 2nd July, published a telegram from Pince Omar Toussoun to the King applauding his demonstration of his desire to avoid bloodshed and to promote peace, and a reply from the King stressing his devotion to those objects and calling upon God to witness how unwillingly he had joined issue with the Imam.

6. The arrival of the first contingent of Saudi troops to return from the Yemen by sea caused a slight stir in Jedda on the 2nd July when the Besse steamer *El Hak* brought 200 or 300 men from Hudeida. There were no signs of patriotic exaltation, but there was much moving about of cars. Larger numbers of troops may be expected in a few days in the *Alavi* of the Mogul Line (Turner, Morrison and Co. of Bombay). She was chartered at short notice as a result of the negotiations mentioned in my telegram No. 148 of the 23rd June, and left Jedda for Hudeida on the 1st July, instead of proceeding to India with pilgrims as had been previously arranged. It appears from the latest naval reports that she will suffice to complete the evacuation of the Saudi forces, although the first enquiries addressed to Messrs. Gellatly, Hankey and Co. were for shipping for 5,000 men. Messrs. Gellatly, Hankey and Co. were unable to make any offer.

7. Thus ends the Saudi-Yemeni war, satisfactorily though perhaps not gloriously for anyone concerned. The great personages who have been least in the picture during the final phase have been the eldest sons of the two principals. It is to be hoped that they will inherit the prudence of their fathers, in which case the peace settlement should be an important factor in the political stabilisation of Arabia. It may also prove to have given a stimulus to the idea of Arab solidarity against the rest of the world.

8. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome and to His Majesty's Chief Commissioner at Aden.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

[E 4627/715/25]

No. 7.

*Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received July 18.)*

(No. 211. Confidential.)

Sir,

Jedda, July 3, 1934.

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith the Jedda report for June 1934.

2. Copies have been distributed as in the list appended to the report for January.

I have, &c.

ANDREW RYAN.

Enclosure in No. 7.

JEDDA REPORT FOR JUNE 1934.

I.—Internal Affairs.

118. Ibn Saud remained in Taif until the 20th or 21st June, when he went off on a hunting expedition. His two eldest sons remained throughout the month in their commands in the south. It is not clear whether the third son, Muhammad, who went to Riyadh several weeks ago to lead reinforcements to the south, actually proceeded to the front, although one outside source represents him as having taken the field with large forces. The fourth son, Khalid, continued



to act as President of the Council and as Minister of the Interior, until the promulgation on the 22nd June of a decree merging that Ministry in the office of the President of the Council. Fuad Bey Hamza continued to act as Minister for Foreign Affairs, and visited Jedda twice for short periods beginning on the 4th June and the 21st June.

119. There was again no important news from the interior. On the 26th June the Persian Legation in Jedda gave currency to a rumour of a movement against Ibn Saud at Riyadh. There has been no confirmation of this, and the settlement with the Yemen makes it increasingly unlikely that the disaffected elements which exist in the country will venture to try conclusions with the King in the near future.

120. On the 15th June the Saudi Government announced important amendments in the customs tariff, the general effect of which was (a) to do away with differences between the specific duties previously charged on rice, wheat and flour, which were formerly taxed at rates varying with the quality, but are now subjected to flat rates likely to give a rather higher yield on the total importation; and (b) to fix specific duties for a large range of normal articles which were previously lumped under general headings in the list of goods dutied *ad valorem*. There has been no public departure, so far as publication by the Central Government is concerned, from the principle that the customs tariff applies to the whole of Saudi Arabia, but it was recently reported from Bahrein that the duties on certain articles in Hasa had been reduced. This may be due to the action of the local Director of Customs, Muhammad Tawil, who has recently visited the Hejaz. This personage, though he has shown himself an active collector of money for Ibn Saud's purposes, is shrewd enough to realise the detrimental effect of the sudden extension to the Persian Gulf coast last year of the Hejazi system of duties, when the latter were increased as described in paragraph 85 of the report for May 1933.

121. On the 3rd June there arrived in Jedda two airmen, a pilot and a mechanic apparently, whom the Saudi Government had engaged in Egypt. They are White Russians, one or both of whom were employed in the Hejaz in King Hussein's time. They have held very much aloof from the European life of Jedda. They apparently found the three sound Wapitis in good condition except for lack of tyres, tubes, &c. These were still awaited at the end of the month.

122. No progress has been made towards the grant by Ibn Saud and the Sheikh of Koweit of an oil concession in the Koweit neutral zone. As a result of certain statements made by Mr. Ydlibi in London, Sir Andrew Ryan addressed enquiries to Fuad Bey Hamza on the 6th June, the replies to which showed that the Saudi Government had gone a long way towards accepting Mr. Ydlibi's proposals (see paragraph 71 (a) of the report for April), but have not formally committed themselves pending their acceptance by the Sheikh of Koweit. Moreover, they now admit an obligation to give the Standard Oil Company of California the first refusal, as far as they are concerned, of any concession which may be contemplated, once terms acceptable to both themselves and the sheikh have been arrived at. This produces a complicated situation for everyone concerned, including His Majesty's Government and the Iraq Petroleum Company, who have shown interest in the affair.

123. The Saudi Government announced officially on the 15th June that they had cancelled the concession to Dr. Jeelani for a railway between Jedda and Mecca, on grounds of non-fulfilment of the conditions after more than one prolongation of the period allowed (see paragraph 242 of the report for November 1933).

124. Mr. Philby claims to have reached a new agreement with the Saudi Government regarding the importation of cars to take the place of the agreement which broke down last year (see paragraphs 241 and 268 of the reports for November and December 1933). According to a statement which he made to Sir Andrew Ryan in June, the new arrangement is more favourable to Sharqieh (Limited) and therefore more practical, but it was dependent on the acquiescence of the Ford Company. The position as regards this is not yet known to the Legation, and no public announcement has been made.

125. Mr. K. S. Twitchell (paragraph 267 of the report for December) returned to Jedda on the 27th June as the representative of the newly-formed Saudi Arabian Mining Syndicate (Limited), a private company with a capital of

£20,000. The participants, other than Mr. Twitchell, in this appear to be mainly, if not all, British, and to represent an important backing of varied interests for Mr. Twitchell's long cherished gold-mining scheme. He is to treat with the Government for prospecting rights in various areas.

126. Ibn Saud was reported early in June to have made grants of ground in Jedda to the Minister of Finance and his brother, to Fuad Bey Hamza and to the gentleman who has succeeded the late Governor of Jedda as local head of the principal commercial house in the place. This appears to be a new departure, and the report is confirmed as regards the merchant, Hajji Yusuf Zeinal, whose firm have long done much business with the Government and have imported unusually large quantities of rice this year.

## II.—Frontier Questions and Foreign Relations in Arabia.

127. The Yemeni concentrations described in paragraph 105 of the last report seemed at the end of May to foreshadow a possible attack on the Saudi position in the Yemen littoral. The impression that the Imam had merely *reculé pour mieux sauter* appeared to be borne out by a report that an Italian ship had arrived at Mocha on the 25th May with 6 million rounds of ammunition, as well as rifles, machine guns and stores. Nevertheless, the Imam surrendered two of the three principal Idrisis, who reached Hodeida on the 3rd June and whose "family" of 300 persons were also surrendered. It soon became apparent that the Imam had no intention of fighting and was taking definite steps to complete the fulfilment of the three conditions, to which Ibn Saud had subordinated the coming into force of the peace treaty already signed at Taif. Although occasional skirmishes were still reported from Hodeida, the military movements presented increasingly the appearance of being preparatory to the resumption of control by the Yemenis, and a Saudi evacuation, partly by land but largely by sea, from Hodeida.

128. The *détente* proceeded rapidly by a series of stages, the most important of which may be briefly summed up as follows: It was officially announced on the 11th June that the Yemeni forces had evacuated the whole of the mountain area, and that the one important Idrisi still outstanding had been sent to Sana with a view to his being surrendered. Next day, the 12th June, the Imam's envoy, Abdullah-al-Wazir, left Jedda by sea, accompanied by the mission of Arab mediators, reduced in number by the earlier departure of Muhammad Ali Pasha Allouba for Egypt. A courier carrying Ibn Saud's ratification of the peace treaty left in the same ship. It arrived at Hodeida late on the 14th June, and the mediators went to Sana for a few days on the 16th. On the 19th June it became known that the Imam had accepted the treaty and had signed his instrument of ratification. He would appear to have completed also the arrangements for the surrender of Abdul Wahhab-al-Idrisi about that time, though the date for the actual handing over has not yet been announced. Finally, on the 22nd June the ratifications of the peace treaty were exchanged at Hodeida between the Amir Feisal and Abdullah-al-Wazir.

129. After this everything proceeded smoothly up to the end of the month. Various outlying places were formally redelivered to the Yemenis, and news of the handing over of Hodeida itself was expected at any moment. Several parties of Saudis left by land for the north, and some by sea, though a difficulty over ships made it impossible to ship more than a small portion of the 1,500 troops who were to be embarked on the 29th June. The Saudi Government were looking for transport for much larger numbers, and were understood on the 30th June to have chartered an Indian pilgrim ship to collect the troops from Hodeida. The Amir Feisal was expected to leave on the 1st July.

130. During all this time there has been practically no news of the heir apparent. He would appear to have attacked the Yemenis at Fara towards the end of May, when Ibn Saud was threatening to resume hostilities, but to have been called off. Since then he has been lost to sight and almost to memory.

131. The Treaty of Taif, to give it its official name, proves to have been signed on the 20th May. It is a lengthy document in twenty-three articles, with a protocol on arbitration and six letters annexed. The most important article of the treaty defines the frontier, on the double principle of describing the general trend of the boundary by directions and place names and indicating separately the allocation of various places and tribes. It starts from the sea a short way



north of Medi, and gives to Ibn Saud the mountain area which has figured so much in recent events, as well as Najran. Its value is not so much that it adds to his territory as that it confirms his legal title, at any rate for twenty lunar years, the duration of the treaty, to what he has claimed most insistently. The treaty stresses the spirit of Islamic and Arab brotherhood in which it has been concluded between two countries forming "one nation," but there is nothing in it to support the view that it amounts to a practical alliance, much less to the establishment of a veiled Saudi protectorate over the Yemen. It gives the Imam, for the first time in Saudi official language, the title of His Majesty the King of the Yemen, and has every outward mark of being an agreement made on equal terms. There is no provision for an indemnity, and no evidence to support the suggestion made in some quarters that Ibn Saud has got one under some separate arrangement.

132. Hasan and Abdul-Aziz-al-Idrisi reached Mecca on the 25th June, and were to be followed by Abdul-Wahhab. All three will probably be interned at Riyadh, but they are likely to be quite well treated, the King having confirmed his assurances in this respect in published replies to their telegrams of repentant submission.

133. The question of Ibn Saud's eastern frontier, which started as one affecting Qatar, has become so definitely a major Anglo-Saudi question that it is better dealt with in chapter III below.

134. There is nothing important to record in connexion with Ibn Saud's other frontiers, except that on the 2nd June Fuad Bey Hamza, returning a belated reply to Mr. Calvert's letter of the 18th November (paragraph 251 of the report for November) about Hazim, enquired, innocent-like, whether Sir Andrew Ryan would supply him with any information regarding the recent survey work at that place.

### III.—Relations with Powers outside Arabia.

135. On the 15th June the Legation addressed a short note to the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs reaffirming bluntly, under instructions, the view of His Majesty's Government that the legal position in regard to Ibn Saud's eastern boundaries is determined by the Anglo-Turkish Conventions of 1913-14. This elicited an equally strong note from the Saudi Government, dated the 20th June, in which they rejected this view and which they supported by a memorandum. Their main points were that they contested the *locus standi* of the Turkish Government in regard to the territories involved at any time after Ibn Saud's occupation of Hasa on the 13th April, 1913, and that His Majesty's Government had, by their first treaty with Ibn Saud of the 26th December, 1915, undertaken to recognise the sovereignty of Ibn Saud over the dominions of his ancestors, the limits of which were to be determined in due course. The memorandum made extensive claims in regard to Qatar and the hinterland of the Trucial Coast. The firmness of the Saudi contentions was to some extent mitigated by the anxiety displayed by Fuad Bey Hamza for a friendly settlement, in conversation with Sir Andrew Ryan on the 22nd June.

136. Other questions with the Saudi Government pursued a normal course, but the "blue line" policy of His Majesty's Government and other factors had thrown Ibn Saud into one of his periodic fits of anxiety as to his position *vis-à-vis* His Majesty's Government. On the 6th June Fuad Bey Hamza conveyed to His Majesty's Government, through Sir Andrew Ryan, an enquiry from the King as to whether His Majesty's Government would engage in "conversations" with a view to a co-ordination of policy. As on previous occasions, His Majesty expressed readiness to meet the views of His Majesty's Government at all points, if only they would be forthcoming, and he referred darkly to coming dangers, including the danger to the Arab world from the hostility of Turkey and Persia to Iraq in particular and to the Arab cause in general. The reply of His Majesty's Government, which Sir Andrew Ryan communicated to Fuad Bey on the 22nd June, was also, as usual, sympathetic but non-committal. There is no likelihood of formal conversations, but it is possible that Fuad Bey may visit London privately in the autumn, in which case he has been promised an opportunity of discussing outstanding questions with the Foreign Office. He contemplates a tour in Europe for reasons of health in any case.

137. British, Italian and French ships continued to keep an eye on Hodeida during the month, the two British sloops taking the duty alternately. The

Saudi Government, having decided to evacuate, no longer worried over the presence of the ships. At the end of June it looked, amusingly enough, as though the display of Italian flags on shore might cause trouble between the Italian authorities and the Imam, as soon as the latter reoccupied the town. The prospect on the 30th June was that all the foreign ships would leave simultaneously as soon as it should become clear that no danger to foreign subjects need be apprehended, but His Majesty's Government were unwilling to tie themselves too definitely to the principle of simultaneous withdrawal, in case the Italians should delay their departure unduly.

138. The Diplomatic Body in Jedda, depleted by the departure for abroad of the Dutch, Persian and Egyptian representatives and the departure for Taif of the Soviet Minister and the Acting Turkish Chargé d'Affaires, has been reinforced by the arrival on the 17th June of the new Iraqi Chargé d'Affaires and consul-general, Seyyid Kamil-al-Gilani. He has been brought on in the world by his brother, a former Prime Minister of Iraq. Though not very intelligent, he seems to have a good knowledge of Arab politics and politicians and is amusingly frank about such things as his efforts to counteract Saudi influence in Syria, during his recent sojourn in Beirut as consul-general.

### IV.—Miscellaneous.

139. The King's birthday was celebrated at the British Legation on the 4th June by a reception attended by about 100 guests of all the usual variety. The local notables included Fuad Bey Hamza and the Governor of Jedda. Mr. Philby, who, as he grows older, grows milder in his attitude towards King and country, if not much less critical of the policy of His Majesty's Government in Arabia, expedited a journey from Taif to Jedda in order to be present.

140. The small trickle of foreign journalists continued in June. An Austrian, M. H. Lechenperg, who arrived on the 3rd June, was allowed to visit Taif. There was also an Italian whose name is unknown to the British Legation. Even his sex was in doubt for a day or two, as some joker put it about that the bachelor Italian Chargé d'Affaires was entertaining a lady of the press. Saudi Arabia has had the unusual and agreeable sensation for some little time of being in the world's eye. A Japanese paper has hailed Ibn Saud as the equal of European statesmen, though still the denizen of a desert; a man greater than Hitler, had he but a nation like the Germans behind him. And the *Japan Times* of Tokyo published on the 7th May a long article by Mr. Philby.

141. Mr. A. S. Calvert returned to Jedda on the 20th June and will take charge of the Legation on the departure of His Majesty's Minister, probably on the 15th July. Mr. E. J. Powell, of His Majesty's Office of Works, arrived in Jedda on a short visit on the 29th June.

142. There are few pilgrims left in the Hejaz. The number of Indians who have had to be repatriated as destitutes up to date is 563. The Legation is still faced with the problem of the Africans mentioned in paragraph 115 of the last report. Otherwise the past pilgrimage period has passed happily enough.

143. The position as regards the manumission of slaves during the month of June was as follows:—

On hand at the beginning of the month: 2 males, 2 females, 1 child.  
Took refuge in June: 1 female, 1 child.  
Manumitted in June and repatriated: 1 male.  
Locally manumitted: 1 female.  
Disposed of by special arrangement: 1 male, 1 female, 1 child.  
On hand at the end of the month: 1 female, 1 child.

144. The fifth heading above relates to the family mentioned in paragraph 95 of the report for April. Following on prolonged negotiations with the local authorities and reference to the Foreign Office, the Legation accepted a duly attested and legalised certificate by the alleged owner, which sufficiently established the free status of the two adults and the fact that they were lawfully married; and agreed not to send them out of the country on the strength of this certificate and of arrangements for their being looked after by a highly respectable local family.



*Political Resident in the Persian Gulf to India Office.*—(Communicated by India Office, July 19.)

(Confidential.)

Sir,

*Bushire, June 28, 1934.*

IN continuation of my telegram dated the 27th June, 1934, I have the honour to enclose four chronological tables showing Wahabi relations with Hasa (west of the blue line), and Qatar, the Trucial Coast and the Sultanate of Oman (east of the blue line). These, I think, dispose of any "ancestral" claims by Ibn Saud to any part of the territories in question, at all events to the three last named. His occupational claims to Hasa are not in dispute.

2. The submission of vague ancestral claims is a favourite device of Arab rulers, and I recollect that the Imam of the Yemen, when I was at Aden, based his claim to the Aden Protectorate partly on ancestral grounds, which on examination proved to be entirely fictitious. Sometimes the chaotic and tribal conditions of Arabia make it difficult to refute such pretensions, but in the present case the task has been comparatively simple.

*Hasa: (Table "A.")*

3. It will be seen from the table that, prior to Ibn Saud's occupation of Hasa in 1913, the Wahabis had only occupied that province for two comparatively short periods, *i.e.*, twenty-three years, from 1795 to 1818, and eight years, from 1830 to 1838. This hardly comprises an ancestral claim, and Hasa is no more naturally Wahabi because they have occupied it for the last twenty years than Riyadh and Central Nejd can be said to be naturally Shammar because the latter held it from 1888 to 1902. The ancestral home of the Wahabis is, of course, Central Nejd; where they hold sway elsewhere in Arabia, it is merely by virtue of their very recent conquests. However, the point is of an academical nature.

*Qatar: (Table "B.")*

4. Ibn Saud has certainly no claims on Qatar. The Wahabis only occupied it, more than a century ago, for two years, *i.e.*, from 1809 to 1811. On occupational grounds, the Turks, who occupied it from 1871 to 1914, would have the strongest claim, but their claim was never recognised by His Majesty's Government, and in 1914 was renounced.

*Trucial Coast: (Table "C.")*

5. More than a century ago, from 1800 to 1820, Wahabi influence was strong in this area, but they have never been in occupation of any point on the coast or in the interior with the exception of Baraimi, from which the Trucial Coast sheikhs have made various efforts to eject them. Such influence as they exercised has been retrograde, and their allies at one period were the notorious Qawasimi pirates. As British influence increased Wahabi influence waned, and at present any direct influence which they have left is confined to Baraimi, though the Trucial Coast sheikhs may from time to time pay Ibn Saud some sort of "tribute" in order to prevent the latter inciting his tribes to raid their hinterland territories.

*Oman: (Table "D.")*

6. At various times in the past (the last occasion being in 1865) the Wahabis, with Baraimi as their centre, have ravaged the Sultanate with fire and sword, and exacted tribute from more than one Sultan. No place in Oman, however (with the exception of Baraimi), has been in occupation of the Wahabis, and no tribute has been forthcoming from Muscat for many years.

*Tribute.*

7. In the course of this letter and in the attached tables mention has been made of "tribute" ("zakat") paid to the Wahabis. There are two sorts of tribute which are paid to Ibn Saud. There is (a) that which is paid by the inhabitants of an area under Wahabi occupation, which is of the same nature as taxes paid to any Government, and which is a recognition of Wahabi rule.

(b) There is also the "tribute" which is exacted by Ibn Saud from sheikhs outside his kingdom under threat of raids or other unpleasantness. This, of

course, is the modern blackmail, or the ancient Danegeld, and is in no way a sign of submission to Wahabi rule. Such tribute as is exacted by Ibn Saud in the territories east of the blue line is Danegeld, pure and simple.

I am sending copies of this letter, with enclosures, to His Majesty's Minister at Jeddah and the Government of India.

I have, &c.

T. C. FOWLE, *Lieutenant-Colonel,*  
*Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.*

#### Enclosure in No. 8.

#### CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES.

##### "A."

Reference, <sup>(1)</sup> Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Lorimer. Page	Date.	Wahabi relations with Hasa.
1053	1760	Foundation of the Saud dynasty by Mohammed-bin-Saud, who endeavoured to conquer Hasa from the Beni Khalid sheikhs but failed.
947	1795 to 1818	Wahabis conquer and occupy Hasa.
948	1818 to 1819	Egyptians expel Wahabis and occupy Hasa.
951	1819 to 1824	Hasa under Beni Khalid sheikhs and Rahmah-bin-Jabir, a Qawasimi pirate.
953	1824 to 1830	Second conquest of Hasa by Wahabis.
955	1830 to 1838	Second occupation of Hasa by Wahabis.
957	1838 to 1840	Expulsion of Wahabis by Egyptians, who occupy Hasa a second time.
960	1840 to 1871	Egyptians evacuate Hasa, which remains under Beni Khalid sheikhs.
965	1871 to 1913	Annexation and occupation of Hasa by the Turks.
	1913 to 1934	Expulsion of Turks from Hasa by Ibn Saud, who has occupied it up to date.

##### "B."

#### Wahabi relations with Qatar.

790	1809 to 1811	Qatar under Wahabis.
791	1811	Expulsion of Wahabis by Sultan of Muscat.
798 to 800	1811 to 1871	Qatar partly under its own sheikhs and partly under those of Bahrain.
802	1871 to 1914	Occupation of Qatar by Turks. Turkish sovereignty over Qatar was never recognised by His Majesty's Government. Turkish Government informed accordingly (p. 811).
822	1893	Unsuccessful rising by Qataris against Turks.
825	1898	Second unsuccessful rising against Turks.
95	1912 to 1914	Ottoman Government, under the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1913, renounce all rights to the peninsula.
paragraph 2		
95	1915	Conclusion of treaty with Ibn Saud, in which the latter undertook "to abstain from aggression or interference with Trucial sheikhdoms and Qatar."
paragraph 5		
95	1916	Conclusion of treaty with Qatar.
paragraph 6		
88	1922	Sir Percy Cox finding that Ibn Saud was endeavouring to include the Qatar Peninsula within a tract of country for which he was about to negotiate an oil concession, took him to task and reminded him "that he had nothing to do with Qatar, except to respect it, under the terms of his treaty with us, and insisting on the limitation of his discussions to the country west of the longitude of Salwah Bay. His Highness accepted this injunction without argument."
paragraph 10		
89	1927	Conclusion of fresh treaty with Ibn Saud in which the latter undertook merely "to maintain friendly and peaceful relations with . . . the sheikhs of Qatar and the Oman Coast."
paragraph 13		

<sup>(1)</sup> References in italics are to the corresponding pages in P.G. 13.



Reference. Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf. Lorimer.	Date.	Wahabi relations with Trucial Oman.
Page 635	1800	Wahabis take Baraimi.
635	1802 to 1820	Wahabis exercised considerable influence on Trucial Coast (see "Qatar," 1811).
687	1820 to 1823	A large proportion of the people still Wahabi in sympathy, but no trace left of secular power.
671	1820	General Treaty of Peace made under auspices of His Majesty's Government between the sheikhs of the Trucial Coast.
694	1835	Maritime truce made under auspices of His Majesty's Government between the sheikhs of the Trucial Coast.
696	1843	Ten years maritime truce.
702	1838 to 1840	Egyptian intrigues in Trucial Coast, which come to an end by evacuation of Hasa by Egyptians.
706 to 707	1845 to 1848	Reoccupation of Baraimi by Wahabis until expelled by local rising.
707	1849	Wahabis re-establish themselves at Baraimi.
708	1850 to 1851	Unsuccessful attempts by the Trucial sheikhs to expel the Wahabis.
726	1853 to 1892	Wahabis maintained an agent at Baraimi until he was killed in 1869, when Wahabi influence disappeared for the time being. In connection with Baraimi, it is interesting to note that in 1904 (see p. 771) the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi took Baraimi temporarily from the Bani Naim, i.e., from the local tribes, not from the Wahabis.
738	1892	Exclusive agreements made by the Trucial sheikhs with His Majesty's Government.
747	1892 to 1907	In 1905 Wahabis propose to interfere in Trucial affairs, but desist on a hint by British Government to Ibn Saud that such interference would meet with disapprobation of His Majesty's Government.
88 paragraph 9	1908 to 1928	In 1915 treaty concluded between His Majesty's Government and Ibn Saud (see under "Qatar"). In 1927 (p. 89, paragraphs 14 and 15) an increase of Wahabi influence was noticed, which it was thought might interfere with the air route.
	1927	Conclusion of Treaty of Jedda with Ibn Saud (see under "Qatar").
	1928 to 1934	Air route initiated in October 1932, and has since been operating without interference. Wahabis still exercise some little influence over Baraimi, and it is possible that some of the Trucial chiefs pay some sort of tribute to Ibn Saud from time to time to prevent his inciting his tribes to raid their hinterland territories. Speaking generally, however, it may be said that at the moment direct Wahabi influence on the Trucial Coast is of little practical importance.
"D."		
Wahabi relations with Oman Sultanate.		
423	1800 to 1803	First occupation of Baraimi by Wahabis.
424-425	1803	Wahabis declare war on Oman, which is closed by payment of tribute by Oman.
441	1807 to 1820	Hostilities between the Wahabis and the allies—the Qawasimi pirates and Oman, in the course of which the Wahabis, with Baraimi as a base, invade and ravage Oman on various occasions and exact "tribute" as the price of peace.
456	1829 to 1856	Further Wahabi threats lead to the Sultan having to pay further "tribute."
473	1864 to 1866	Wahabis plunder Sur, causing loss to British traders there. Consequent intervention for the first time of British authorities in support of Muscat, and guns and ammunition supplied to Sultan for attack on Baraimi. Punitive naval operations against the Wahabis at Qatif and Damman and punishment of their allies, the Jannabah, at Sur. Wahabis undertake not to attack Arab allies of British if "zakat" was punctually paid. British Government decline to guarantee payment of "zakat." Wahabis take no action.
	1866 to 1908	Wahabi influence declines, and Sultans of Muscat cease to pay "zakat."
56	1908 to 1934	Wahabis continue to possess some influence at Baraimi, from which from time to time they take local "tribute."

[E 4808/79/25]

No. 9.

Sir A. Ryan to Sir John Simon.—(Received July 23.)

(No. 226.)

Sir,

Jedda, July 10, 1934.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 209 of the 3rd July, I have the honour to record a few further matters of minor interest connected with the Saudi-Yemen settlement.

2. In paragraph 4 of my despatch under reference, I mentioned the probability of the Idrisis being interned comfortably at Riyadh. This was the forecast of Fuad Bey Hamza, but the *Umm-al-Qura* of the 6th July announced that Ibn Saud had received Seyyid Hasan and Abdul Aziz-al-Idrisi on the 1st July and given them permission to choose their own place of residence. They elected to remain in Mecca, and the King gave orders that a palace near the Great Mosque should be prepared for them. The same paper stated that Seyyid Abdul Wahhab-al-Idrisi had arrived at Jizan *en route* for Mecca.

3. The Amir Feisal, who, as you know, left Hudeida by land on the 5th July, is understood to be making a short stay at Jizan in order to organise the Administration there. Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman, who came by sea on the steamship *El Nasr* of the new Arab Steam Navigation Company, arrived in Jedda yesterday. He was accorded an official reception, the almost triumphal character of which was in strong contrast with the lack of attention shown to Fuad Bey Hamza when he left Jedda two days earlier. No particular honours were shown to the main body of troops, who came back by sea on the steamship *Alawi* of the Turner, Morrison Line on the 6th July. They were doubtless to receive their meed of praise and presents of rice and rials at Mecca or Taif. I understand that a fair amount of largesse has been bestowed on the troops who have already reached Taif.

4. The *Umm-al-Qura* of the 6th July also published telegrams exchanged on the 1st July between the King and the King of Iraq. King Ghazi hailed the recent settlement as a good omen and a step towards brotherliness and unity between Arab countries, and invoked a blessing on Ibn Saud's efforts to promote the welfare of the Arab nation. The Saudi King, a little more prolix, said that the brotherhood established by the treaty was what he had striven for. He had sought to promote the union of Moslems in general and Arabs in particular. He relied on God and trusted that in King Ghazi, all Arab leaders and he himself would co-operate to preserve their prestige, the safety of their countries and the honour of the Arab nation.

5. I have heard fantastic stories from Taif of the intimacy established between Ibn Saud and the Imam's envoy, Abdullah-al-Wazir, whom some of the gossips regard as a possible postulant for the throne of the Yemen. These stories deserve little attention, but it is worth mentioning that the liberation of Jerusalem has been spoken of as a possible object of common policy to be pursued by the reunited Arabs.

6. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome and His Majesty's Chief Commissioner, Aden.

I have, &amp;c.

ANDREW RYAN.

[E 4936/279/91]

No. 10.

Political Resident, Persian Gulf, to Secretary of State for India.—(Communicated by India Office, July 28.)

(Confidential.)

THE Honourable the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf presents his compliments to His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, and has the honour to transmit to him a copy of a note on the aerial reconnaissances of the 9th May and the 29th June, 1934, and information obtained from the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Abdullah-bin-Isa of Bahrein, the Residency Agent, Sharjah, and others.

Bushire, July 15, 1934.



## Enclosure in No. 10.

*Note on Aerial Reconnaissances of May 9 and June 29, 1934, and Information obtained from the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Abdullah-bin-Isa of Bahrein, the Residency Agent, Sharjah, and others.*

## 1. General.

IT is said that there are no settlements, other than Sakak and Ambak, in the area east of the blue line as far as Abu Dhabi. This is confirmed by the aerial reconnaissances (visibility 4 to 7 miles) along the line Zakhnuniyah Island-Salwa-Sakak-Khor-al-Odaid-Sabakhah Matti-Yas Island. There are, however, desert wells here and there.

## 2. Sakak and Ambak.

Sakak (7 miles south-east of the sea at Salwa near a conspicuous flat-topped hill) consists of a couple of stone and mud-houses, eight or nine reed huts and a garden of fifty to seventy palms with wells. There are two groups of about five wells situated 3 miles south-east of Sakak. Ambak is said to be about the same size.

Sakak is said to be inhabited in the summer (it was on the 29th June), but is vacated in the winter, when the people take their animals away to graze. The people are Al Morrah and pay zakat to Ibn Saud.

## 3. Khor-al-Odaid.

The Khor-al-Odaid is a fine stretch of water forming a good flying-boat anchorage, and is connected with the sea by a channel passable for motor launches.

## 4. Sabakhah Matti.

The Sabakhah Matti is, as the term Sabakhah implies, a salty waste. It is said to be uninhabited, but a trail from Oman to Hasa, usable by motors, passes across it inland. On the 29th June wells (no trees or cultivation) with a few Bedouin tents, were seen some 15 miles inland on the west edge of the Sabakhah. The coast is low and beset with shoals and reefs.

## 5. Dhafrah.

Dhafrah (an area in the hinterland south of Abu Dhabi, not to be confused with Jafurah area south-west of Qatar) is almost entirely Manasir country, and there are very few persons from other tribes (except the Awamir) there. The tract is fertile, with a lot of trees and plenty of water. There are no built houses, but palm branch huts are used. Water is particularly plentiful at Uqailah, which is consequently used as a tribal gathering place by the Muzakis (tax-gatherers). The Manasir are under a number of petty sheikhs. Rashid-bin-Mana is said to be the leading sheikh, but it is doubtful whether he has any real influence. The Awamir, whose area is beyond Dhafrah up to Baraimi (Bani Naim and Bani Qitab), have a more powerful head, Hamad-bin-Rakadh. Both the Manasir and Awamir at present pay zakat to Ibn Saud, but only, it is stated, during the last four or five years. The Manasir, at any rate, are said to have paid zakat to Sheikh Zaid-bin-Khalifah of Abu Dhabi (who died about 1918), and the history of Trucial Oman tends to confirm this. So far as can be traced none of the tribes in this area have furnished men for the Yemen campaign.

## 6. Muzakis.

Each year lately a party (who may number some thirty armed men with some servants) of Muzakis (tax-gatherers), has been sent to Dhafrah by the Amir of Hasa (Abdullah-bin-Jilouwi) about April. In 1933 the head of the party was Badr-al-Utaibi, but as there were complaints of his harshness to the people, Muhammad-al-Sahali was sent in 1934.

Zakat is charged at the rate of 1 dollar for each full-grown camel, half a dollar for each young camel, and 1 dollar for every five sheep. In 1934, 10,000 dollars are said to have been collected from the Manasir in Dhafrah. If a man cannot pay in cash, it is alleged that the Muzakis take one of his best camels and assess its value at one-fifth of what it should be (this is possibly exaggerated).

The Muzakis sometimes go as far afield as Baraimi (where Ibn Saud has no

agent) and Oman, where, however, they do not press for fixed rates, but take what is given to them; in practice the payments vary, less if Ibn Saud is engaged in war or other preoccupations, more if he is free to deal with the matter.

No zakat is paid by the Trucial chiefs to Ibn Saud, but courtesy presents of five to ten camels are sent yearly to the Amir of Hasa "by way of friendship" and the bearers receive presents in return. These presents do not imply any suzerainty.

7. The position seems to be that the Trucial chiefs and the tribes fear aggression from Ibn Saud and to try to placate him, the former by presents of courtesy and by listening to representations, for example, in cases affecting his nationals, and the latter by paying zakat to him. But these arrangements are of recent standing and merely indicate that for the moment Ibn Saud is sufficiently powerful to make the payment of blackmail to him an appropriate insurance.

[E 5064/2429/25]

No. 11.

*Memorandum respecting Anglo-Saudi Relations, as seen by Sir A. Ryan in July 1934.*

IN my despatch No. 233 of the 20th June, 1931, I discussed Ibn Saud's attitude in regard to his relations with His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, in the light of long conversations which I had had with Fuad Bey Hamza and the King himself. At that time he sought a rapprochement with His Majesty's Government. He was obsessed by suspicion of the Hashimite rulers and one of his objects was the impossible one of ousting them from the position of special favour accorded to them by His Majesty's Government.

2. When I returned to England in February 1932 in the special circumstances of the Bakhit slavery case, I attempted to review generally, but systematically, the position as between Ibn Saud and His Majesty's Government in a memorandum submitted at home on the 23rd February, 1932. Many of the statements and conclusions in that memorandum now call for revision, not so much, I think, because they were erroneous at the time (except in one particular, to which I will revert), as because of many changes in the situation in Arabia since it was written. In one respect, however, the position is similar to that of June 1931. Ibn Saud still sees in His Majesty's Government the most important foreign factor in the world about him and he again seeks a rapprochement in a spirit of anxious misgiving. I again attempt a general review in the light of my recent conversations with Fuad Bey Hamza and then with the King at Taif, which I am recording separately.

3. I cannot do better than use the same structure as in my memorandum of the 23rd February, 1932, with which I hope that this paper may be compared.

(A) *Position as regards Various Questions of Interest to His Majesty's Government.*

4. In my memorandum of the 23rd February, 1932, I enumerated these questions under twelve heads as follows:—

- (1) Transjordan frontier question.
- (2) Persian Gulf questions.
- (3) Arabian air route.
- (4) Shell benzine.
- (5) Other money matters.
- (6) Pilgrimage.
- (7) Slavery.
- (8) Deportation of British subjects and protected persons.
- (9) Aqaba and Maan.
- (10) Hejaz Railway.
- (11) Naval visits.
- (12) Treatment of foreign representatives in Jedda.

5. Subject to important modifications, the above list of headings still covers all outstanding matters of sufficient importance to affect, or to be capable of affecting, the general relations between His Majesty's Government and Ibn Saud.



The present position in regard to each may be briefly and roughly summed up as follows:—

(1) *Transjordan Frontier.*

This has ceased to create any serious difficulty since the conclusion of the Saudi Transjordan Treaty of July 1933. The attitude of the Saudi authorities still gives rise to some local complaint, but there has been no renewal of controversy with the Saudi Government and there is no reason to anticipate any recrudescence of serious trouble, so long as Ibn Saud adheres to his present policy and the Amir Abdullah refrains from embroiling himself in the internal affairs of Saudi Arabia.

(2) *Persian Gulf Questions.*

These, on the other hand, have assumed major importance and may now be classified under the following four heads, the last of which is of *capital* importance to our relations with Ibn Saud:—

(a) *Koweit Blockade.*—No substantial progress has been made with the solution of this problem since February 1932. Now that the Transjordan frontier is out of the way, His Majesty's Government would like to press for a removal of Ibn Saud's embargo on trade between Koweit and Nejd. Their action has been hampered by the attitude of the Sheikh of Koweit, notably in regard to his old claims against Ibn Saud.

(b) *Bahrein Transit Dues.*—This question, which is eminently one for a rational business settlement, has been singularly complicated by the Ahmedi incident of about October 1932 and the growth in Ibn Saud's mind of a belief that His Majesty's Government are determined, in the interests of Bahrein, to boycott direct trade with the Hasa Coast. The personal resentment shown by the King during my recent visit to Taif gives this aspect of the general question of transit a special importance.

(c) *Oil.*—This has become an important factor in the whole situation in North-Eastern Arabia since the grant of the Hasa Oil Commission to the Standard Oil Company of California. The most immediate matter of common concern to His Majesty's Government and Ibn Saud is the proposed concession for the Koweit neutral zone. It is firmly believed by the British authorities in the Persian Gulf that Ibn Saud is also taking a hand in the business of the proposed Qatar concession.

(d) *The Blue Line.*—The oil question was mainly instrumental in directing attention last year to uncertainty in regard to the frontier of Qatar and by inference to the whole question of the eastern and south-eastern boundaries of Saudi Arabia. After much consideration His Majesty's Government decided to take their stand on Anglo-Turkish Conventions of 1913 and 1914, as establishing a legal position which must be the basis of any discussion with the Saudi Government, to whom they would be prepared to make some concessions, but only minor concessions. Ibn Saud's reaction has been not less violent than was to be expected. He has begun by asserting, on legal and historical grounds, claims to territory far beyond the blue line established by the Anglo-Turkish Conventions.

(3) *Arabian Air Route.*

Further efforts since February 1932 to obtain certain facilities from Ibn Saud in respect of the Hasa Coast ended last year in a deadlock. Ibn Saud was prepared in principle to grant the facilities, but on exorbitant money terms. The amount which His Majesty's Government was prepared to pay was not such as could possibly attract a ruler so jealous of his sovereign rights. We have been living from hand to mouth, reducing what are technically violations of his territory by forced landings and flying over to a minimum and apologising for them before the Saudi Government have time to protest. This has worked well enough in the conditions of the last year, as it has not suited Ibn Saud to be sticky with His Majesty's Government over small matters. He cannot, however, count indefinitely on his continued complaisance.

(4) and (5) *Pecuniary Claims in regard to Shell Benzine, &c.*

The Shell benzine affair was settled by a commercial agreement in 1932 and this has panned out satisfactorily for Shell. The E.T.C. cable account with the

Saudi Government continues to fall into arrear, but the debit balances have not of late been such as to alarm the company. Other private claims are not so important as to affect relations between the Governments. The only claims which still call for notice in this connexion are what has now become a joint claim of His Majesty's Government and the Government of India for the cost of arms supplied to Ibn Saud by the latter in 1929 and the claim of His Majesty's Government in respect of the Saudi share in the cost of the MacDonnell enquiry in 1930. No progress has been made towards the recovery of these claims since February 1932. Strong efforts made at the instance of the Treasury last autumn failed, and the matter was subsequently left in abeyance pending the liquidation of the Saudi Yemen situation. I returned to the charge early this month, but the prospect of any early recovery of the amounts is still poor.

(6) *Pilgrimage.*

No action was taken on my tentative suggestion in February 1932 that, if a favourable opportunity offered, we might attempt a general agreement regarding temporal matters affecting British pilgrims. I no longer think that such an attempt would serve much useful purpose, as pilgrimage conditions in the Hejaz have been slowly improving and I think that further improvement can be left to the Saudi Government's sense of self-interest, Ibn Saud's not insincere desire to do his duty by pilgrims, even though they must be exploited, and to outside Moslem influences. I should like, however, to arrive at a reasonable settlement of the question of the Government of India dispensaries, which I brought up to date in a recent despatch.

(7) *Slavery.*

I have recently submitted elaborate reports on this question. Broadly speaking, the position is that, if Fuad Bey Hamza can be trusted, Ibn Saud might be induced to promulgate a public act imposing severe restrictions on the traffic in slaves, but is as keen as ever on getting His Majesty's Government to abandon the right of manumitting and repatriating slaves taking refuge in the Legation at Jedda. My despatches set forth the pros and cons of a deal on those lines, which, on the whole, I favour. Nothing can usefully be done at present to promote the larger object of securing a general suppression of slavery in Saudi Arabia.

(8) *Deportation.*

Deportation cases, as such, have given less trouble of late than they did three years ago. This heading may now be replaced by the additional heading at (13) below.

(9) *Aqaba and Maan.*

There has been no essential change since February 1932 in regard to this question. It looked last year as though Ibn Saud might seek to reopen it as soon as the Treaty of Jedda became denunciable in March 1934. More recent indications have shown that, while anxious to maintain the reservations he made in 1927, he realises that it would be useless and impolitic to reopen the question at present. On the other hand, the completion of new maps of the frontier area may create an awkward situation for His Majesty's Government, if it should be found necessary to seek Ibn Saud's consent to a modification of the *de facto* frontier between Transjordan and the Hejaz. This question might by extension affect also the position in regard to the frontier between Transjordan and Nejd.

(10) *Hejaz Railway.*

The Saudi Government have recently reopened the question of reconditioning this railway as a whole. They seem ready to shelve indefinitely, by a reservation, the questions of the ownership and alleged Wakf character of the railway. His Majesty's Government are considering the matter sympathetically in consultation with the French Government.

(11) *Naval Visits.*

There has been no change in the position since February 1932. The Red Sea sloops continue to visit Jedda four or five times a year, after the Legation has notified the Saudi Government, without, however, asking for permission for the



visits. They do not attempt to visit other ports, including, by an elucidation of standing instructions, anchorages in the Farsan Islands. This limits the freedom of action of the sloops, but is not attended by any serious disadvantages. Last year the Saudi Government spoke of enacting general regulations on naval visits, but they have not so far taken any definite action in this sense.

(12) *Treatment of Foreign Representatives.*

The position described in my memorandum of the 23rd February, 1932, remains unaltered in essentials, but there has been some improvement in matters of detail. The Saudi Ministry for Foreign Affairs has been somewhat strengthened, and, though its remoteness from Jedda still causes inconvenience, opportunities for oral discussion are afforded more frequently and somewhat more regularly. There had been breaches in the practice of confining European foreign representatives to Jedda, the most important being my recent visit to Taif by invitation, and the King's expression of hope that he would be able to receive me in Riyadh also. There has been less inclination to head the Legation off representations on behalf of British Moslems. On the other hand, the Saudi Government are again playing with the idea of making distinctions between diplomatic and consular officers. I gathered this from a personal conversation with Fuad Bey some weeks ago, when he was inclined to insist that the distinction must be made, though he inferred that non-diplomatic officers would not necessarily be deprived of certain privileges, *e.g.*, customs immunity. I urged him to let well alone, and his illness deprived me of any opportunity of exploring the matter further. We must be prepared, sooner or later, for attempts to curtail the very extensive privileges at present enjoyed by all members of the Legation staff, attempts which it may be difficult to resist, but which, in the conditions of Jedda, would have extremely inconvenient consequences.

I add one general heading in substitution for (8), viz.:-

(13) *Attitude of the Saudi Government towards Moslem British Subjects and Protected Persons.*

This problem has grown in importance since 1932, owing to the increasing indications of a drive on the part of the Saudi Government to reduce certain foreign elements in their country, especially such as tend to over-populate the towns, and, in particular, Mecca, with nondescripts. Broadly speaking, it may be said that their policy is less open to criticism than the methods employed in their spasmodic attempts to give effect to it. The growth of xenophobia, however, directs attention to the lack of any *droit d'établissement* whatsoever. I have dealt with the whole subject at length in a recent despatch to the Foreign Office.

6. If any general settlement of outstanding questions with the Saudi Government was attempted, it would be necessary to ensure the completeness of the above list, but it certainly omits nothing of first-class importance bearing on their relations with His Majesty's Government. So far as British interests are concerned, the most important at present are those under heads (2), (3) and (7); and, in a less degree, (6), as regards dispensaries, (12) as regards diplomatic and consular privileges, and (13). Ibn Saud, on his side, attaches supreme importance to (2) (d), and considerable importance to (2) (b) and (c), to (7) as regards manumission, and to (10).

(B) *Position of Ibn Saud.*

7. In my memorandum of the 23rd February, 1932, I said that "Ibn Saud is almost certainly on the down grade." This estimate has been falsified by his good luck on various occasions since then, and still more by the good management which has enabled him to take advantage of his luck. Were his financial position more assured, he would now be in a very strong position, thanks to his repression of the revolts in the Northern Hejaz and Asir in 1932, his success in avoiding serious trouble with elements which might be tempted to turn against him in Nejd, and by his conduct of his quarrel with the Imam Yahya, in the last stages of which he renounced any idea of conquering the Yemen, but established a legal title to the whole of Asir and Nejran, and sterilised, probably for a long time to come, if not for ever, the influence of the Idrisis.

8. It is worth while to run through the reasons I gave in my memorandum of the 23rd February, 1932, for the then apparent deterioration of Ibn Saud's political position:-

(a) The administration of the Hejaz has not become less efficient, and has perhaps somewhat improved. There are fewer internal signs of discontent with the Saudi régime than there were in 1931. It cannot be called popular, but some at least of the tribes are too broken to think of resistance, the townsmen seem more resigned, and some of them have an increasing interest in the stability of the present régime.

(b) Such general indications as afford a criterion suggest that Ibn Saud has strengthened his position *vis-à-vis* the extreme Wahhabi opponents of modern ideas. It is impossible to form any exact estimate, but the King has shown more boldness in various directions, and less is heard of the Ulama of Nejd. In 1932 he was able to make good use of the Ikhwan, without letting them get out of hand.

(c) Ibn Saud's isolation in the Arab world is less pronounced than it was. He has learnt to control his hatred, if not his suspicion, of the Hashimites. Carefully nurtured sympathy with him seems to abound in Palestine and in Syria, perhaps also in more independent Arab countries. The unexpected death of King Feisal last year has removed his most conspicuous rival in the Arab world. His display of moderation in his final settlement with the Imam has advertised him as a man who is first and foremost a good Arab, all the more so as other good Arabs, like the would-be mediators, headed by the Grand Mufti of Palestine, have been enabled to claim an unearned share of the credit. He has, in fact, discreetly avoided any appearance of a desire to dominate the Arab world too exclusively and has beaten with all the more effect the Moslem Arab drum.

(d) Remaining himself a good but not extreme Wahhabi, Ibn Saud has tended to show greater tolerance towards Moslems of other denominations, both Sunni and Shia. He divides the sympathies of non-Arab Moslems generally, but he has probably more admirers in countries like India, and perhaps the Dutch East Indies, than he had some years ago. Even in Egypt, the third largest contributor to the pilgrimage, there is a strong tendency to criticise King Fuad's policy of holding him at arm's length.

(e) Ibn Saud is still isolated from the general life of the family of non-Moslem nations. Even here, however, there are signs of a readiness on his part to increase his intercourse with individual nations; and, though the signs are small, they may foreshadow a process capable of considerable acceleration in the more favourable conditions which would result from a consolidation of his position in Arabia. He has realised that he must look west for any serious help in developing his resources, witness the grant of the Hasa Oil Concession to the Americans and his readiness to treat with Europeans for the grant of other concessions.

(f) He is still poor in competent advisers on other than purely Arab affairs. There have been no notable additions to the list, but the men he has have grown somewhat in stature. His Minister of Finance has learnt the useful lesson that, while old debts may be put on the long finger, current liabilities must be met, if credit is to be maintained. Payments in respect of immediate transactions have been much more punctual of late. Fuad Bey Hamza is a doubtful factor. He has advanced in the art of diplomacy, but he does not seem to enjoy the full confidence of Ibn Saud, and his own heart-searchings in quest of a larger life may sweep him out of the King's service. Should he remain in it and retain his health, he is capable of rendering much service as a liaison between Saudi Arabia and the modern world. Even Sheikh Yussuf Yasin has achieved more elasticity. Some other less well-known men have also come on, like Muhammad Tawil, a Hejazi, whom Ibn Saud has used successfully in Hasa, and perhaps the Ibn Muammar, a Nejdî, who represents him in Bagdad.

9. Ibn Saud has shown no further signs of physical decline. He has grown somewhat lethargic in his habits; but he looks fit, lives a healthy life, especially in Nejd, no longer overeats (if, indeed, there was truth in the Sheikh of Koweit's suggestion that he used to), and imposes his will on his advisers in all major matters. Even the story current some time ago of his impotence seems to have been exaggerated, as he has had a son within the last few months.

10. It would be going far beyond the mark to suggest that the future of the Saudi régime is assured, but Saudi Arabia offers at least as much prospect of



stability as it has done at any time in the recent past, and there is no reason why Ibn Saud should not long hold his own, unless he should prefer to abdicate in favour of his heir, still an almost unknown quantity.

11. One of the most notable features of Ibn Saud's policy in the last two years has been his anxiety for settlements calculated to ensure the future of his régime. He has been at pains to seek compositions with his neighbours, to disarm the hostility of internal enemies, *e.g.*, by tying to his service the sons of former adversaries, and to secure, as far as he can do in his own lifetime, the succession to the throne of his eldest son, with the consent of the rest of the family. He may still be attracted by the idea of an ultimate extension of Saudi power in Arabia, but for the moment he seems to be content with a position of pre-eminence among Arab rulers; to have eschewed further territorial ambitions; and to be wooing the elusive nymph, Security. And, as I have already indicated, he sees in good relations with His Majesty's Government the primary external factor in his security. Hence his present eagerness to induce them to guarantee in some way his position *vis-à-vis* Iraq and the position of both *vis-à-vis* neighbouring non-Arab States like Turkey and Persia. Hence, too, his extreme discomfiture at seeing His Majesty's Government spring their blue-line policy on him shortly after they had come to terms with the Yemen, and while he himself was still engaged in a doubtful conflict with that country. He mistrusts and fears more than he loves them, and he would be more than human if he realised fully that that was a mere coincidence.

(C) *Position of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom.*

12. The list of outstanding questions in section (A) above is less formidable than its length would suggest. The general relations between His Majesty's Government and Ibn Saud have, in fact, improved materially in the last three years. They are now threatened more seriously by the "blue line" than by any other subject of difference.

13. I cannot personally believe in the undoubted legal validity of the "blue line." It appears to me that in 1915 and in 1927 His Majesty's Government were content to treat Qatar, the Trucial Sheikdoms and Muscat and Oman as contiguous with Ibn Saud's dominions, whatever the boundaries. So far as Qatar is concerned, it seems to me that the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1913 itself proceeded on that assumption, and that the "blue line" was conceived as an arbitrary boundary between Qatar territory and Nejd. When it was recently decided not to assert the sovereignty of the Sheikh of Qatar so far west, I myself preferred the expression "British sphere of influence" to the expression "Qatar sphere of influence"; but I do not think it can be seriously maintained that Great Britain has a sphere of influence in Eastern Arabia, except in the sense that her influence extends to the coastal principalities up to their territorial limits, whatever these may be.

14. It appears to me further that the Anglo-Saudi Treaty of December 1915 destroyed the validity of the "blue line" by substituting a new criterion for the determination of Ibn Saud's boundaries. He was to be recognised as independent within his ancestral limits. These limits may conceivably have lain west of the "blue line." This appears to be Colonel Fowle's latest contention, but I have not seen his paper on the subject. The limits may have lain east of the "blue line," as Ibn Saud contends, invoking in support of his claim the proceedings of the Pelly mission, the records of which I have not seen either. My point is that the 1915 treaty imposed on His Majesty's Government an obligation to accept the ancestral limits in due course as determining the boundary and implied that the coastal principalities extended up to this boundary. I have toyed with the argument that the treaty of 1915 imposed limitations on Ibn Saud's sovereignty and that the treaty of 1927, which removed those limitations, again altered the whole position and re-entitled His Majesty's Government to rely on the "blue line," on the ground that Ibn Saud was no longer negotiating as a rebel against Turkish authority, but as the ruler of a succession State.

15. This argument, however, carries no conviction in my own mind. If it corresponds with what His Majesty's Government believed to be the position in 1927, they might well have been expected to make it clear, instead of which they made no reference to the "blue line," and again treated the coastal principalities

as though they were Ibn Saud's neighbours. The argument would be stronger, if it could be shown that when the Nejd-Koweit frontier was redrawn in 1922, Ibn Saud explicitly admitted the validity of the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1913 as a starting-point, but I have no record in Jedda of the negotiations regarding the Nejd-Koweit boundary.

16. Whatever the legal position, the political considerations are of much greater moment. I am convinced that Ibn Saud will never admit that the Turks had any right to dispose of territories over which, he affirms, his Arab ancestors ruled, and which had, in his view, been simply usurped, partly by the Turks and partly by Ibn Rashid. Hatred of the Turks is in his blood, and he will accept no position, however sustained by legal argument, which rests on an *ex post facto* recognition of their rights. One might as well expect Mr. de Valera to swallow Pope Adrian's bull.

17. Nor will Ibn Saud waive his claim to jurisdiction over tribes like the Murra, who may or may not have submitted to his ancestors, but who have been within his sphere of influence and no other for many years. However great his desire for a rapprochement with His Majesty's Government he will be at least as insistent on his claim to a great part of the hinterland of the Trucial coast as he has been on his claim to Najran, which, until the Imam admitted it, rested on similar foundations. He may accept a compromise, but not a compromise turning on a minor modification of the "blue line," or a compromise involving the recognition of a British sphere in the interior of Arabia, distinct from their sphere as quasi-protectors of the coastal States. If he recognised the existence of such a distinct British sphere, he would go down to Arab history as one of the lost leaders.

18. I do not think I exaggerate when I say that the future relations of His Majesty's Government with Ibn Saud will depend very largely on their attitude in regard to this question. If we take the possible course of shelving it on the basis that each side reserves its position, he will remain with a rankling sense of injury. In my opinion the issue must be faced, and His Majesty's Government must choose between a more or less open breach with Ibn Saud or a generous settlement with him.

19. I have throughout regretted the unwillingness of His Majesty's Government to admit frankly to Ibn Saud that their interest in the area in dispute is due largely to its oil potentialities. He himself undoubtedly realises this, but has been too canny to raise the question of his own initiative. His interest is to assert territorial claims over an area which has been left indeterminate. That of His Majesty's Government, as I see it, is to show cause why it has become important to define the position in that area, and the best way to do so would be to discuss frankly the economic reasons for doing so.

20. In Part (C) of my memorandum of the 23rd February, 1932, I reviewed three possible policies in regard to the questions then outstanding between His Majesty's Government and Ibn Saud. They were in a nutshell: (a) positive support; (b) friendly *laissez-faire*; and (c) stiffness all along the line. On the whole, I favoured *laissez-faire*, and, on the whole, that policy has been followed, except as regards the Transjordan frontier question. I am now inclined to favour a more constructive policy, the corner-stone of which would be a generous settlement of the "blue line" question. The expiration of the original period of the Treaty of Jedda and Ibn Saud's recent expression of a desire for "conversations" provide an opportunity for seeking a fairly comprehensive understanding with him, if it should suit His Majesty's Government to enter into one.

21. The form and scope of such an understanding would require careful consideration. As regards the form, we might contemplate a treaty and annexes to be substituted for the Treaty of Jedda, a supplementary treaty or a series of exchanges of notes. As regards the scope I suggest tentatively the following points for consideration:—

- (i) His Majesty's Government very naturally ruled out any sort of an alliance, and would presumably find it equally impossible to guarantee the security of Ibn Saud. They have, however, foreshadowed, subject to a satisfactory settlement of certain questions, a formula giving expression to the special nature of their relations with him. It might achieve his object to some extent, if the suggested



understanding were made operative for a longish period, say fifteen or twenty years, and affirmed the readiness of His Majesty's Government to use their endeavours to preserve the *status quo* in Arabia, subject to their undertaking no military commitment and not intervening, except by way of good offices, in any dispute between Arabian rulers, neither party to which was in special relations with them as regards its foreign relations. Whether they would go further and meet Ibn Saud to the extent of promoting a security pact of some sort between him and Iraq is a question beyond my competence.

- (ii) The understanding might define the boundaries within which His Majesty's Government recognise the sovereign independence of Ibn Saud, subject to any agreements which may be entered into between the Arab Governments concerned. These boundaries would be: The present frontier between Saudi Arabia and Iraq; the present boundary between Nejd and Transjordan, with, perhaps, some definition of the status of places close to it like, *e.g.*, Hazim; a readjusted *de facto* or, if possible, *de jure* frontier between the Hejaz and Transjordan; the boundary recently established by treaty between Saudi Arabia and the Yemen; a line corresponding to the Anglo-Turkish violet and blue lines, but well to the south-east and east of them, so as to include in Ibn Saud's territories the Diras of the Murra, Manasir and other named tribes, and to avoid the creation of a distinct British sphere behind the States on the Persian Gulf coast, whose authority would be held to extend up to the new line, subject to any arrangements arrived at between these States under the auspices of His Majesty's Government; and the existing Nejd-Koweit boundary, modified, perhaps, by a division of the neutral zone.
- (iii) It might be agreed, though it would be difficult to obtain Ibn Saud's consent to this, that economic concessions between the blue and violet lines and the new line should be granted only to groups composed in equal parts of interests nominated by His Majesty's Government and Ibn Saud respectively.
- (iv) Assurances might be given to Ibn Saud that His Majesty's Government and the Government of Bahrein will not attempt directly or indirectly to impede direct shipments of goods to the Hasa coast, subject to the unfettered right of the Bahrein Government to levy transit dues at such rates as they may decide on goods for Nejd landed in Bahrein or transhipped in Bahrein waters.
- (v) A settlement of the Koweit blockade question might be made an essential condition of the understanding.
- (vi) The understanding might bind Ibn Saud to give reasonable facilities for landing in and flying over the coastal strip of Hasa in case of need, subject to an undertaking not to fly inland without special sanction from Ibn Saud and to payment of a reasonable annual rent, in recognition of Ibn Saud's sovereign rights. If the understanding were for fifteen or twenty years, this rent might possibly be met in anticipation by a remission of the Saudi Government debts to His Majesty's Government.
- (vii) His Majesty's Government might abandon the right of manumission as from the promulgation by Ibn Saud of a public act on lines to be communicated to His Majesty's Government, unofficially, but for their approval, in the course of the negotiations.
- (viii) The understanding might define the position in regard to the Hejaz Railway in the light of any arrangements that may be contemplated, in consultation with the French Government, during the next four months.

22. The above suggestion would not, except as regards head (i), involve any real departure from the principle hitherto followed by His Majesty's Government of dealing with each outstanding question on its merits. What it amounts to is a proposal that we should explore the possibility of effecting a simultaneous settlement of the longish number of individual questions of importance, which are now outstanding.

23. Whether the understanding should cover any other points like Government of India dispensaries, diplomatic and consular privileges, treatment of British subjects, most-favoured-nation treatment, &c., would depend a good deal on whether it took the form of a new general treaty or some other form, which would leave the main text of the Treaty of Jeddah intact, though not all of the annexed letters.

ANDREW RYAN.

Foreign Office, July 30, 1934.

[E 5063/2429/25]

No. 12.

Record of Conversations during Sir A. Ryan's Visit to Taif, July 12-14, 1934.—  
(Received in Foreign Office, August 3.)

WHEN Sheikh Yussuf Yasin met me outside the town on the 12th July, he spoke to me briefly about the King's reasons for wishing to see me. In the first place, the King had received other foreign representatives in Taif, and he wished to see also the British representative. Indeed, he hoped for an opportunity of receiving me at Riyadh as well, where he had seen no British representatives for a long time, although he had met them elsewhere. The King also wished to take this opportunity of explaining his views on certain matters, notably the position to the north of his country, with special reference to Iraq, and the question of his frontiers. I expressed my gratitude to His Majesty for having enabled me to see him at Taif, and said that I had taken the instructions of my Government immediately on receiving his invitation, and had been directed to ascertain the King's views on the matters that interested him, in order to be able to report on them at home. My Government had drawn my special attention to two matters, one of which Sheikh Yussuf had mentioned, *viz.*, frontiers, the other that of Saudi relations with Koweit.

2. My audience with the King in the evening of the 12th July was almost entirely formal. On my thanking the King for his invitation and all the kindness I had been shown, he referred very pointedly to his hope of seeing me in Riyadh also, perhaps after next Ramadan, if the rains were good. The only other matter of interest mentioned was the fact that the return of the heir apparent was delayed, as Seyfal Islam Ahmed had been prevented from completing the return of hostages by trouble with rebellious Yemeni tribes. I gathered from Mr. Philby later in the evening that the news of trouble inland in the Yemen had created some stir in high Saudi circles. Incidentally, Mr. Philby spoke as an unrepentant critic of the recent peace settlement and a non-believer in its permanence. He believed still that the King had got some money payment and an assurance that the administration of the Yemen Tihama would be left in the hands of Abdullah-al-Wazir for not less than a year.

3. Sheikh Yussuf Yasin called on me at 8 A.M. on the 13th July, in accordance with my suggestion that we should have a talk before I discussed serious affairs with the King. I gave him a general outline of my instructions, emphasising the readiness of His Majesty's Government to cement their relations with Ibn Saud, their belief that a closer relationship could best be attained by the friendly settlement of outstanding questions, of which the most important were those mentioned above; their willingness to engage in conversations about these questions; and their wish to be informed as to the King's desiderata. I tried to sound Sheikh Yussuf as to whether Fuad Bey could be empowered to hold conversations in London, saying that, if so, His Majesty's Government had expressed readiness to hear him, or whether the Saudi Government would prefer that the questions should be discussed on my return, after preparation in the interval. Sheikh Yussuf thanked me for my statement and my assurances of the friendly dispositions of His Majesty's Government, but said that, as the King wished to see me early and could not keep me after 10 A.M., he preferred not to comment on what I had said. He delivered a message from the King, asking me to convey to His Majesty's Government and the naval authorities an expression of his appreciation of the helpful attitude of the commanders of the Red Sea sloops during the occupation of Hodeida. I responded suitably, saying that the reports of the officers in question had contained constant references to the gracious kindness of the Amir Feisal and the excellence of their relations with Sheikh Abdullah Sulciman, &c.

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4. The King received me at 9 A.M. I was accompanied as before by Mr. Furlonge and Ismail Effendi, who interpreted. Sheikh Yussuf Yasin was in attendance.

5. After compliments, I said that my Government had wished me to take the first opportunity of expressing to the King in person the great pleasure with which they had heard of the Saudi-Yemen settlement and their sense of the wisdom which His Majesty had shown in dealing with that matter. The King observed that he desired peace with all his neighbours, firstly, because they were Arabs, and secondly, because there was nothing to divide them. Relying, as he always did, on the friendship of His Majesty's Government, he had sought their advice. It accorded with his own views, and he had acted on it. I said that His Majesty's Government believed the settlement to be in the best interest of Arabia and gave the credit for it to the King, who had shown firmness, and had known how to show moderation as well in the last phase.

6. The King's repeated affirmation of his friendship for His Majesty's Government gave me the opportunity of saying that it was a primary point in my instructions that I was to reaffirm their friendly dispositions, which were unchanged and unchangeable, towards him and his country. I referred to the importance of removing all possible obstacles to complete friendship by settling certain questions, and to the wish of His Majesty's Government to be informed as to the desiderata of the King.

7. The King started with the subject of Iraq. His statements were long and involved, but his drift was clear. He thought that all the Arab States needed some outside Power to rely on, and, though there were other friends, that Power should be Great Britain, who was in close relations with all of the States concerned. He was worried lest Iraq, the strongest of the Arab States, should be attacked by Turkey and/or Persia, and lest he should be menaced through Iraq as a result. He observed that he was currently supposed to be hostile to the ruling family of Iraq, but the truth was that he had nothing against them. He desired their interest as well as his own. If the arrangements between His Majesty's Government and Iraq were such as to secure Iraq against the attacks he feared, he would be easy in his mind. When Fuad Bey had spoken of an Arab alliance, he had had in mind some arrangement between Iraq and Saudi Arabia to ensure their mutual safety. The King intimated that he would like to see some such arrangement arrived at under the auspices of His Majesty's Government, the friend of both.

8. I explained that my conversations with Fuad Bey, which had not been completed owing to his illness, had not carried us quite as far as the King suggested, *e.g.*, he had not used the word "alliance" in connexion with Iraq. I was all the more anxious to ascertain the King's exact meaning, in order that I might convey his ideas in a definite form to my Government. I gathered from his statement that he had in mind three possible things in connexion with the dangers he feared: (a) He had said that he would be easy in his mind, if assured that the arrangements between His Majesty's Government and Iraq sufficed to safeguard the latter; (b) he had spoken of the possibility of some sort of alliance or defensive treaty between him and Iraq; (c) he had spoken as though he contemplated some sort of an alliance to which His Majesty's Government could be a party.

9. The King did not demur to my analysis. After some further exchanges, I observed that point (c) was the only one on which I could speak. His Majesty's Government were animated in regard to the Arab States by a desire to see them prosper and by the friendly sentiments of which we had spoken, but it was contrary to their general policy to enter into alliances except in very special cases. Their treaty with Iraq was defined as a "Treaty of Alliance," but that alliance was the resultant of a process by which Iraq had evolved from her Turkish provincial status, through British occupation and subsequent dependence on His Majesty's Government, to her present position. This was a special case, and that of Saudi Arabia presented no analogy, for the simple reason that Ibn Saud had never been dependent on Great Britain. Great Britain had created Iraq. The King had created himself.

10. The King said that he was not insisting on an alliance with His Majesty's Government. Their firm friendship was as good as any alliance. He redefined his ideas in terms which amounted to this: that he would like to come to an arrangement with Iraq, under the auspices of His Majesty's Government,

by which they would stand together, and which would be supported by an undertaking, to be subscribed to by both the parties, that they would not stand against Great Britain or support any Power who went against her. He considered that such an arrangement would achieve his own object and would serve the interests of His Majesty's Government.

11. At 3.30 I called on the Amir Khalid, as Acting President of the Council. This visit was purely formal. The Prince was shy but self-possessed, and made mild efforts at conversation.

12. The King received me again at 4 P.M. After compliments, I said that I hoped for a further expression of his views. He replied that he had nothing more to say. In view of what Sheikh Yussuf had told me, this was obviously merely a device for throwing on us the onus of initiating the discussion of the frontier question. I therefore said that one of the outstanding questions which His Majesty's Government desired to see settled was that of his eastern boundaries. I explained how convinced His Majesty's Government were that the only legal basis was that resulting from the Anglo-Turkish Conventions of 1913-14. The King, I said, now ruled what had been a part of the Ottoman Empire, and had succeeded to the position of the former Turkish Government. If this thesis, to which His Majesty's Government held strongly, was admitted, they would be prepared to consider modifications of the legal frontier. I must, however, make it clear that what they had in view was minor modifications, a qualification rendered necessary by the comprehensiveness of the claims put forward in the last Saudi note in regard to Qatar and the country towards Muscat and Oman.

13. This started the King in a most vehement statement. Catching on to the mention of Qatar, Muscat and Oman, he said that he might well claim all these places as really his. He scouted the idea that the coastal principalities represented true sovereignties. They owed their existence to people who came from over the sea for trading purposes. He was not, however, he explained carefully, claiming them now, as he had entered into an agreement with His Majesty's Government regarding them. He was not going back on that agreement, even though his rule would be welcomed in the coastal areas themselves. He merely cited the more extensive claims, which would be justified but for that agreement, in support of what he did claim, *viz.*, authority over tribes like the Murra, an authority extending from Dhafra all the way, I gathered, to the hinterland of Oman. He denied the justice of the attitude of His Majesty's Government, even though they should insist on it, and he should be compelled to yield.

14. I cannot reproduce in an exact form what the King said, but the foregoing paragraph gives the main lines of his thesis, which, as regards his ancestral claims, he supported by the following arguments, interspersed in his discourse:—

- (a) His historical claim to Qatar, Muscat and Oman, which he had renounced, was borne out by what had passed between one of his predecessors and Colonel Pelly. He spoke of a treaty or agreement as having been reached at that time. He was obviously speaking from general recollection, and was not even certain of Colonel Pelly's exact name, but he was quite positive that Colonel Pelly had recognised a very extensive Saudi authority.
- (b) When Jasim and Ahmed-bin-Thani of Qatar had quarrelled (perhaps some forty years ago, but no exact date was mentioned), one of them had appealed to the then Ibn Saud for assistance, and the then Ibn Saud had composed the quarrel.
- (c) He admitted that in his early days, Ibn Rashid had held Riadh and the Turks, Hasa. Even then Turkish authority did not extend further. They had never ruled the Murra, &c., and had at one moment requested him to use his authority over the tribes, whereupon he had sent persons, whom he named, to control them. He denied absolutely the right of the Turks to alienate his ancestral rights.

15. I observed that the King had himself come to an agreement with the Turks, by which he recognised their sovereignty. He did not deny this, but said that what he had done had been done under British advice given by Captain Shakespear, presumably under instructions.



16. Towards the end the King expressed his surprise on learning that the Turks had agreed to alienate rights, which were not in their lawful disposal. He denied all knowledge until recently of the Anglo-Turkish conventions. I said that surely the Saudi Government had been aware of the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1913, which, if I remembered rightly, was referred to specifically in the Koweit-Nejd Boundary Convention of 1922. Both the King and Sheikh Yussuf were positive that they had no previous knowledge of the conventions of 1913-14, and made the point that they were not among the treaties communicated to Ibn Saud after the conclusion of the Treaty of Jedda. Sheikh Yussuf recalled a reference to the old Koweit boundary in the Koweit-Nejd Boundary Agreement of 1922, but did not think that the Anglo-Turkish Convention as such was referred to (I subsequently verified my own recollection, which was correct).

17. I did not feel that I could invite the King to make a further communication to His Majesty's Government during my absence on leave, as suggested in my instructions, having regard to the fact that the last official note of the Saudi Government remains unanswered, and to the extreme vigour of the King's personal reaction. I promised to report all that he had said. The audience ended at 5.30 P.M.

18. Shortly after 6 Sheikh Yussuf called on me to break the news that the King wished to give us presents. I am dealing separately with this.

19. We dined with the King at 6.30. He was in the best of form before and during dinner; chaffed Mr. Philby over his unwillingness to adopt the Royal suggestion that he should take a wife; expounded his own views as to the excellence of matrimony up to the extreme limits allowed by the holy law; and spoke freely of the way in which he was served by the sons of his former enemies. He laughed at reports in the press that one of the Beni Rashid was raising the Shammar against him, when the person named and others of that family were with his sons at the front. All the sons of Dawish, he said, were also at the front.

20. He started on business again about 7.30. I broached the question of the King's relations with Koweit, the adjustment of which was strongly desired by His Majesty's Government with special reference to the desirability of ending the present restriction on trade between Koweit and Nejd. A proposal, I observed, had been made quite a long time ago to seek a basis of settlement, but it had been held up by the question of the claims of the Sheikh of Koweit, a matter which also required settlement. The King expressed eagerness for a settlement of the blockade question on a basis of reciprocity. I asked what he meant; whereupon he developed, not very clearly, various views as to the effect of different prices for commodities in Nejd and Koweit and of smuggling. He said that he could not agree to customs posts on the frontier, as they would cost more than they would produce in the way of revenue, and smuggling would still go on. I suggested that the control exercised by his blockade officer, Al Bagawi, seemed to be pretty effective, and that Al Bagawi might be better employed in collecting revenue than in stopping trade. The King was not impressed by this, but, finally, said that he would welcome a meeting of representatives of himself and the sheikh to devise a settlement. He did not revert to the question of the sheikh's claims. I preferred not to carry the discussion further in view of the sheikh's attitude since the meeting of commissioners was first proposed.

21. I asked the King generally how he wished our discussion to be followed up. I was not very clear, I said, as to the plans of Fuad Bey Hamza. If Fuad Bey was coming to London and was authorised to express His Majesty's views, he would have an opportunity of doing so, while I was at home. Alternatively, the ground might be prepared during my absence for the final handling of the questions on my return from leave. The King said that Fuad Bey was to spend a month in Paris and would be able to speak for him in London. He suggested that I should report our discussions at Taif and that any expression of His Majesty's Government's views should be conveyed to his Government, whereupon Fuad Bey would be instructed. I pointed out that this would take time and the King presently agreed to my counter-suggestion that Fuad Bey should be acquainted with what had passed at Taif, and should be instructed at once as to the line on which he should pursue the discussion in London.

22. At this point I said that, although there were other outstanding questions, I did not wish to trouble His Majesty personally with them, and I proceeded to make a suitable little speech of farewell. After hearing it, the

King said he had something further to speak about. His Majesty's Government were worried about restrictions on trade with Koweit. What of restrictions on trade with Nejd? I asked what he meant and found that he referred to the action taken at Bahrein in regard to direct shipments to the Hasa Coast, and was under the impression that "the Government" had prohibited such shipments. On my asking whether he meant His Majesty's Government or the Bahrein Government he laughed scornfully at the mention of the latter. I said that I knew of only one incident, in which the Bahrein Government had taken action to prevent an abuse of the facilities afforded by Bahrein, by a ship which had tried to take advantage of these facilities to land cargo at Bahrein and so lighten herself sufficiently to be able to land cargo on the Hasa coast, where the ports were not equipped to receive cargoes in the ordinary way. I observed that the ship had proceeded before the matter could be referred to higher authority, but that His Majesty's Government had subsequently proposed a discussion of the whole subject of transit, including that of direct shipments to the mainland. The Saudi Government had rejected this proposal, and, on receipt of a further communication from the Legation, had transferred the negotiations to London, with the result that I had not been concerned in them for nearly two years.

23. The King was insistent that no obstacles should be placed in the way of direct shipment to his ports. If it was a question of port equipment, he said, he could complete the equipment in two months, but what would be the good, if ships were prevented from taking cargo to Ras Tanura? And why should that port be treated differently from Dehai, Basra or any other port? He asked for an assurance that, if he did equip Ras Tanura, ships should not be prevented from going there. Indeed, at one moment he asked that they should be told to go there, to which I replied that His Majesty's Government could not in normal times direct the movements of ships. I pressed him on the subject of the alleged prohibition and at last elicited the admission that he could not substantiate the allegation, though he still evidently thought that an adverse attitude was being taken up. I promised to report what he said, but adhered to my own view that the Saudi Government would have done better to fall in with the proposal of His Majesty's Government for a general discussion with the object of reconciling the interest of Bahrein and the mainland by an agreement, which could, if necessary, be made operative for a fixed time.

24. The chief interest of this discussion was the revelation it afforded of the King's bitter personal resentment. He threw out references which I did not understand, to other countries like Japan, &c., and their attitude towards similar problems. He clung to his grievance long after the latest hour at which he told me he could say his prayers. It was well after 9 when I was able to leave him.

25. Shortly before 10, Sheikh Yussuf called again to deliver the Arab clothes, which I had consented to receive. At 4 A.M. next day he was on the spot once more to see me off. I delayed my departure a short time for a final word about the Bahrein question. I said I had been impressed by the King's anxiety to treat the question of direct shipments as a separate issue. I did not wish His Majesty to think that I had been difficult the previous evening, and assured him that on my return to London I would go into the whole matter.

26. The foregoing account of my conversation at Taif is accurate on all main points, but is not an exact record of all that passed, e.g., as regards the sequence of the individual discussions. For one thing my interpreter was far from well, and the King tried him very high, by delivering long speeches, impossible to render in all their details after he had let himself go. I have omitted various non-essentials, e.g., the King, when foreshadowing future trouble in Northern Arabia, referred to conversations with Captain Shakespear, in which he had similarly foreshadowed the Great War; and, in professing his friendship for His Majesty's Government, he described his confidence in them as being unaffected by the suggestion of Turks and others that His Majesty's Government were, in reality, hostile to him.

27. The general impression I derived was that the King is genuinely desirous of consolidating his position *vis-à-vis* of His Majesty's Government, but is extremely bitter over certain recent aspects of their policy, notably their attempt to impose on him the "blue line." He is almost equally bitter over the Bahrein question, because all that he has grasped of it is the appearance in his eyes of an attempt to boycott his endeavours to develop Ras Tanura and to keep him in a sort of dependence. I gathered from conversations with Mr. Philby on



my return journey the next day that the King had sat up rather later than usual with his intimates after my departure, and had spoken at large, in a tone of excited indignation, about those two questions. Mr. Philby, himself rather excited, said that the King had expressed his firm determination not to give way on the "blue line" question. He emphasised the unfortunateness of the moment at which the "blue line" doctrine had been propounded and begged me to avert a further war.

ANDREW RYAN.

*Foreign Office, July 30, 1934.*

[E 5194/79/25]

No. 13.

*Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.—(Received August 13.)*

(No. 240.)

Sir,

*Jedda, July 30, 1934.*

WITH reference to Sir Andrew Ryan's despatch No. 202 of the 27th June, I have the honour to forward herewith a complete translation of the Treaty of Taif, which has been prepared by Mr. Furlonge.

2. Further study has served little to elucidate the obscurities of article 4 of this document. These arise partly from the absence of any trustworthy and sufficiently detailed map of the area, but more especially from the rather confusing use of the same word to denote the name of a tribe and at the same time to describe its tribal grazing-ground or *dira*. These latter are, moreover, known accurately probably only to the tribes owning them and to neighbouring tribes, who may or may not be in entire agreement as to their boundaries. Until the terrain through which this frontier runs is accurately mapped and surveyed, article 4 will, it is believed, continue to be a somewhat unintelligible concatenation of place and tribal names.

3. Otherwise, no points of importance, other than those noted by Sir Andrew Ryan in his despatch under reference, have emerged except that article 4 does provide for a "friendly and brotherly" delimitation of the frontier.

4. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome, His Majesty's Chief Commissioner at Aden, the Hon. the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire, his Excellency the High Commissioner for Palestine, Jerusalem, His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Bagdad, and His Majesty's High Commissioner for Egypt, Ramleh.

I have, &c.

A. S. CALVERT.

Enclosure in No. 13.

#### TREATY OF TAIF.

In the Name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate.

*Treaty of Islamic Friendship and Brotherhood, between the Saudi Arab Kingdom and the Kingdom of the Yemen.*

HIS Honourable Majesty the Imam Abdul Aziz Abdurrahman-al-Feysal-al-Saud, King of the Saudi Arab Kingdom, on the one part, and His Honourable Majesty the Imam Yahya-bin-Muhammad Hamiduddin, King of the Yemen, on the other part:

Being desirous of ending the state of war unfortunately existing between them and their Governments and peoples;

And of uniting the Islamic Arab nation and raising its condition and maintaining its prestige and independence;

And in view of the necessity of establishing firm treaty relations between them and their Governments and countries on a basis of mutual advantage and reciprocal interest;

And wishing to fix the frontiers between their countries and to establish relations of "Bon-Voisinage" and ties of Islamic friendship between them and to strengthen the foundations of peace and tranquillity between their countries and peoples;

And being desirous that there should be a united front against sudden mishaps and a solid structure to preserve the safety of the Arab Peninsula, Have resolved to conclude a treaty of Islamic friendship and Arab brotherhood between them and for that purpose have nominated the following representatives plenipotentiaries on their behalf:—

On behalf of His Honourable Majesty the King of the Saudi Arab Kingdom, His Royal Highness the Amir Khalid Abdul Aziz, son of His Majesty and Acting President of the Council of Ministers,

And on behalf of His Honourable Majesty the King of the Yemen, his Excellency Sayyed Abdul-bin-Ahmed-al-Wazir.

Their Majesties the two Kings have accorded to their above-mentioned representatives full powers and absolute authority; and their above-mentioned representatives, having perused each other's credentials and found them in proper form, have, in the name of their Kings, agreed upon the following articles:—

#### ARTICLE 1.

The state of war existing between the Kingdom of the Yemen and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia shall be terminated as from the moment of signature of this treaty, and there shall forthwith be established between their Majesties the Kings and their countries and peoples a state of perpetual peace, firm friendship, and everlasting Islamic Arab brotherhood, inviolable in whole or in part. The two high contracting parties undertake to settle in a spirit of affection and friendship all disputes and differences which may arise between them, and to ensure that a spirit of Islamic Arab brotherhood shall dominate their relations in all states and conditions. They call God to witness the goodness of their intentions and their true desire for concord and agreement, both secretly and openly, and they pray the Almighty to grant them and their successors and heirs and Governments success in the continuance of this proper attitude, which is pleasing to the Creator and honourable to their race and religion.

#### ARTICLE 2.

Each of the two high contracting parties recognises the full and absolute independence of the kingdom of the other party and his sovereignty over it. His Majesty the Imam Abdul Aziz-bin-Abdurrahman-al-Feysal-al-Saud, King of the Saudi Arab Kingdom, admits to His Majesty the Imam Yahya and his lawful descendants the full and absolute independence of the Kingdom of the Yemen and his sovereignty over it, and His Majesty the Imam Yahya-bin-Muhammad Hamiduddin, King of the Yemen, admits to His Majesty the Imam Abdul Aziz and his lawful descendants the full and absolute independence of the Saudi Arab Kingdom and his sovereignty over it. Each of them gives up any right he claimed over any part or parts of the country of the other party beyond the frontiers fixed and defined in the text of this treaty. His Majesty the Imam King Abdul Aziz abandons by this treaty any right of protection or occupation, or any other right, which he claimed in the country, which, according to this treaty, belongs to the Yemen and which was (formerly) in the possession of the Idrisis and others. His Majesty the Imam Yahya similarly abandons by this treaty any right he claimed in the name of Yemeni unity or otherwise, in the country (formerly) in the possession of the Idrisis or the Al Aidh, or in Najran, or in the Yam country, which according to this treaty belongs to the Saudi Arab Kingdom.

#### ARTICLE 3.

The two high contracting parties agree to conduct their relations and communications in such a manner as will secure the interests of both parties and will cause no harm to either of them, provided that neither of the high



contracting parties shall concede to the other party less than he concedes to a third party. Neither of the two parties shall be bound to concede to the other party more than he receives in return.

#### ARTICLE 4.

The frontier line which divides the countries of the two high contracting parties is explained in sufficient detail hereunder. This line is considered as a fixed dividing boundary between the territories subject to each.

The frontier line between the two kingdoms begins at a point half way between Medi and Al Musim on the coast of the Red Sea, and (runs) up to the mountains of the Tihama in an easterly direction. It then turns northwards until it ends on the north-west boundary between the Beni Jama'a and (the tribes) adjacent to them on the north and west. It then bends east until it ends at a point between the limits of Naqa'a and Wa'ar, which belong to the Waila tribe, and the limits of the Yam. It then bends until it reaches the pass of Marwan and Aqaba Rifada. It then bends eastwards until it ends, on the east, on the edge of the boundary between those of the Hamdan-bin-Zaid, Waila, &c., who are outside Yam, and Yam. Everything on the right hand side of the above-mentioned line, which runs from the point mentioned on the sea shore up to the end of the borders on all sides of the mountains mentioned, shall belong to the Yemen, and everything on the left of the above-mentioned line shall belong to the Saudi Arab Kingdom. On the Yemen side are Medi, Haradh, part of the Harth tribe, Mir, the Dhahir Mountains, Shada, Dhay'a, part of the Abadil, all the country and the mountains of Razih, Manbah, with Arwa-al-Amshaykk, all the country and the mountains of Beni Jama'a, Sahar-ash-Sham, Yabad and its neighbourhood, the Maraisagha area of the Sahar-ash-Sham, the whole of Sahar, Naqa'a, Wa'ar, the whole of Waila, and also Far with Aqabat Nahuqa, the whole of Hamdam-bin-Zaid, which is outside Yam and Wad'a Dhahran. These mentioned, and their territories within their known limits, and all between the said directions and their vicinities, the names of which are not mentioned and which were actually subject to or under the control of the Yemeni Kingdom before the year 1352, are on the Yemeni side and belong to the Yemen. On the left hand side are Musam, Wa'lan, most of the Harth, the Khuba, the Jabri, most of the Abadil, all Faifa, Beni Malik, Beni Haris, the Al Talid, Qahtan, Dhahran, Wadi'a, all the Wadi'a Dhahran, together with the pass of Marwan, and Aqaba Rifada, and the area lying beyond on the east and north of Yam and Najran, Hadhim, Zur Wada, all the Waila in Najran, and all below Aqaba Nuhuqa, up to the edges of Najran and Yam on the east, all these, and their territories within their known limits, and all between the named directions and their vicinities which have not been mentioned by name, and which were actually subject to or under the control of the Saudi Arab Kingdom before the year 1352, are on the left of the said line and belong to the Saudi Arab Kingdom. Everything mentioned regarding Yam, Najran, Hadan, Zur Wad'a, and all the Waila in Najran, is in accordance with the decision (Tahkim) of His Majesty the Imam Yahya to His Majesty King Abdul Aziz as regards Yam, and the judgment (Hukm) of His Majesty King Abdul Aziz that all of it should belong to the Saudi Arab Kingdom; and while the Hadan and Zur Wad'a and the Waila in Najran belong to Waila, and, except in so far as has been mentioned, do not come within the Saudi Arab Kingdom, this shall not prevent them nor their brothers of Waila from enjoying mutual relations and intercourse and the usual and customary co-operation. This line then extends from the end of the above-mentioned limits between the edges of the Saudi Arab tribes and of those of the Hamdam-bin-Zaid, and all the Yemeni tribes who are outside Yam. All the borders and the Yemeni territories up to the end of the Yemeni frontier in all directions belong to the Yemeni Kingdom; and all the borders and territories up to the end of their boundaries, in all directions, belong to the Saudi Arab Kingdom. All points mentioned in this article, whether north, south, east, or west, are to be considered in accordance with the general trend of the frontier line in the directions indicated; often obstacles cause it to bend into the country of one or other kingdom. As regards the determination and fixing of the said line, the separating out of the tribes and the settlement of their diras in the best manner, these shall be effected by a committee formed of an equal number of persons from the two parties, in a friendly and brotherly way and without prejudice, according to tribal usage and custom.

#### ARTICLE 5.

In view of the desire of both high contracting parties for the continuance of peace and tranquillity, and for the non-existence of anything which might disturb the thoughts of these two countries, they mutually undertake not to construct any fortified building within a distance of 5 kilom. on either side of the frontier, anywhere along the frontier line.

#### ARTICLE 6.

The two high contracting parties undertake immediately to withdraw their troops from the country which, by virtue of this treaty, becomes the possession of the other party, and to safeguard the inhabitants and troops.

#### ARTICLE 7.

The two high contracting parties each undertake to prevent their people from committing any harmful or hostile act against the people of the other kingdom, in any district or on any route; to prevent raiding between the Bedouin on both sides; to return all (property) which is established by legal investigation, after the ratification of this treaty, as having been taken; to give compensation for all damage, according as may be legally necessary, where crimes of murder or wounding have been committed; and severely to punish anyone proved to have committed any hostile act. This article shall continue operative until another agreement shall have been drawn up between the two parties as to the manner of investigating and estimating damage and loss.

#### ARTICLE 8.

The two high contracting parties mutually undertake to refrain from resorting to force in all difficulties between them, and to do their utmost to settle any disputes which may arise between them, whether caused by this treaty or the interpretation of all or any of its articles or resulting from any other cause, by friendly representations; in the event of inability to agree by this means each of the two parties undertakes to resort to arbitration, of which the conditions, the manner of demand, and the conduct are explained in the appendix attached to this treaty. This appendix shall have the force and authority of this treaty, and shall be considered as an integral part of it.

#### ARTICLE 9.

The two high contracting parties undertake, by all moral and material means at their command, to prevent the use of their territory as a base and centre for any hostile action or enterprise, or preparations therefor, against the country of the other party. They also undertake to take the following measures immediately on receipt of a written demand from the Government of the other party:—

- (1) If the person endeavouring to foment insurrection is a subject of the Government which receives the application to take measures, he should, after the matter has been legally investigated and established, receive a deterrent punishment which will put an end to his actions and prevent their recurrence.
- (2) If the person endeavouring to foment insurrection is a subject of the Government making the demand for measures to be taken, he should be immediately arrested by the Government applied to and handed over to the Government making the demand. The Government asked to surrender him shall have no right to excuse themselves from carrying out this demand, but shall be bound to take adequate steps to prevent the flight of the person asked for, and in the event of the person asked for being able to run away, the Government from whose territory he has fled shall undertake not to allow him to return to its territory, and if he is able so to return, shall arrest him and hand him over to his Government.



- (3) If the person endeavouring to foment insurrection is a subject of a third Government, the Government to whom the demand is made and who finds the person in its territories, shall immediately and directly after the receipt of the demand of the other Government, take steps to expel him from its country, and to consider him as undesirable and to prevent him from returning there in future.

#### ARTICLE 10.

The two high contracting parties agree not to receive anyone who has fled from the jurisdiction of his Government, whether he be great or small, official or non-official, an individual or a group. Each of the high contracting parties shall take adequate and effective administrative or military measures, &c., to prevent these fugitives entering within the borders of its country. If one or all of them succeeds in crossing the frontier and entering its territory, it shall be bound to disarm the refugee and to arrest him and hand him over to the Government of the country from which he fled. In the event of its being unable to arrest him, it shall take adequate steps to drive him out from the country which he has entered into the country to which he belongs.

#### ARTICLE 11.

The two high contracting parties undertake to prevent their Amirs, Amils and officials from interfering in any way whatsoever, either directly or indirectly, with the subjects of the other party. They undertake to take full measures to prevent the occurrence of any disturbance or misunderstanding as a result of such actions.

#### ARTICLE 12.

Each of the two high contracting parties recognises that the people of all areas accruing to the other party by virtue of this treaty are subjects of that party. Each of them undertakes not to accept as its subjects any person or persons who are subjects of the other party except with the consent of that party. The subjects of each of the two parties, when in the country of the other party, should be treated in accordance with local law.

#### ARTICLE 13.

Each of the two high contracting parties undertakes to announce a full and complete amnesty for all crimes and hostile acts which may have been committed by any person or persons who are subjects of the other party, but reside in its territory (*i.e.*, in the territory of the party issuing the amnesty). Similarly, each of them undertakes to issue a full, general and complete amnesty to those of its subjects who may have gone, or taken refuge, or in any manner joined themselves, to the other party; for all crimes; and for the property which they may have taken from the time when they came to the other party until their return, whatever its nature and whatever its amount; and not to allow any sort of injury, punishment or constraint to be made upon them on account of their having taken refuge or joined themselves, or of the manner in which they did so. If either party has any doubt of the occurrence of anything contrary to this undertaking, the party entertaining the doubt may apply to the other party to convoke a meeting of the representatives who signed this treaty; if it is impossible for any one of them to attend, he may depute another fully authorised and empowered person, well acquainted with the localities and who is anxious to effect a settlement between the parties and to carry out the rights of both, to attend to investigate the matter, so that no injustice or dispute may arise. The decision of these representatives shall be considered as binding.

#### ARTICLE 14.

Each of the two high contracting parties undertakes to return the property of those of its subjects whom it pardons, and to hand it over to them or their heirs on their return to their country, in obedience to the law of their country. The

high contracting parties similarly undertake not to retain any of the goods and chattels which belong to the subjects of the other party, and not to create obstacles to their free use or to the disposal of them.

#### ARTICLE 15.

Each of the two high contracting parties undertakes not to interfere [*sic*: ? treat with] with a third party, whether it be an individual, a group, or a Government, or to agree with him in any matter which may injure the interests of the other party, or which may harm its country, or which may raise problems and difficulties, or which may expose its welfare, interests or existence to danger.

#### ARTICLE 16.

The two high contracting parties, who are bound by Islamic brotherhood and Arab origin, announce that their two nations are one nation, that they do not wish any evil to anyone, and that they will do their best to promote the interest of their nation, in the shade of tranquillity and quietness, and will exert their best endeavours in all ways for the good of their countries and their nation, intending no hostility to anyone.

#### ARTICLE 17.

In the event of any external aggression on the country of one of the two high contracting parties, the other party shall be bound to carry out the following undertakings:—

- (1) To adopt complete neutrality secretly and openly.
- (2) To co-operate mentally and morally as far as possible.
- (3) To undertake negotiations with the other party to discover the best way of guaranteeing the safety of the country of that party and of preventing its being harmed, and to refrain from any act which might be interpreted as assisting that external aggressor.

#### ARTICLE 18.

In the event of insurrection or hostilities taking place within the country of one of the two high contracting parties, both of them mutually undertake as follows:—

- (1) To take all necessary effective measures to prevent the aggressors or the rebels from making use of their territories.
- (2) To prevent fugitives from taking refuge in their countries, and to hand them over or expel them if they have entered, as explained in articles 9 and 10 above.
- (3) To prevent its subjects joining the aggressors or rebels, and to refrain from encouraging or supplying them.
- (4) To prevent assistance, supplies, arms and ammunition reaching the enemy or the rebels.

#### ARTICLE 19.

The two high contracting parties announce their desire to do everything possible to facilitate postal and telegraphic services, to increase the communications between the two countries, and to facilitate the exchange of commodities and agricultural and commercial products between them; to undertake detailed negotiations, in order to conclude a customs agreement to safeguard the economic interest of their two countries, by unifying customs duties throughout the two countries, or by special regulations designed to secure the advantage of the two sides. Nothing in this article shall restrict the freedom of either of the two high contracting parties in any manner until the conclusion of the agreement referred to has been accomplished.



## ARTICLE 20.

Each of the two high contracting parties declares its readiness to authorise its representatives and delegates abroad, if such there be, to represent the other party, whenever the other party desires this, in any matter or at any time. It is understood that whenever representatives of both parties are together in one place they shall collaborate in order to unify their policy to promote the interests of their two countries, which are one nation. It is understood that this article does not restrict the freedom of either side in any manner whatsoever in any of its rights. Similarly, it cannot be interpreted as limiting the freedom of either of them or of compelling either to adopt this course.

## ARTICLE 21.

The contents of the agreement signed on the 5th Shaban, 1350, shall in any case be cancelled as from the date of ratification of this treaty.

## ARTICLE 22.

This treaty shall be ratified and confirmed by Their Honourable Majesties the two Kings within the shortest possible time, having regard to the common interest of the two sides in this (being done). It shall come into force as from the date of the exchange of the instruments of ratification, except as regards what has been laid down in article 1, relative to the ending of the state of war immediately after its signature. It shall continue in force for a period of twenty (20) complete lunar years. It may be renewed or modified during the six months preceding its expiry. If not so renewed or modified by that date, it shall remain in force until six months after such time as one party has given notice to the other party of his desire to modify it.

## ARTICLE 23.

This treaty shall be called the Treaty of Taif. It has been drawn up in two copies in the noble Arabic language, each of the two high contracting parties being in the possession of one copy.

In witness whereof each of the plenipotentiaries has affixed his signature.

Written in the city of Jedda<sup>(1)</sup> on the sixth day of the month of Safar thirteen hundred and fifty-three.

KHALID-BIN-ABDUL AZIZ-AS-SAUD.  
ABDULLAH-BIN-AHMED-AL-WAZIR.

<sup>(1)</sup> The treaty was signed at Taif and "Jedda" is probably only a slip.

## APPENDIX.

*Arbitration Covenant between the Saudi Arab Kingdom and the Kingdom of the Yemen.*

Whereas their Majesties the Imams King Abdul Aziz, King of the Saudi Arab Kingdom, and King Yahya, King of the Yemen, have agreed in accordance with article 8 of the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Good Understanding, known as the Treaty of Taif, signed on the 6th Safar, 1353, to refer to arbitration any dispute or difference which may arise out of the relations between them, their

Governments and countries, when all friendly representations fail to settle it, the two high contracting parties undertake to effect arbitration in the manner shown in the following articles:—

## ARTICLE 1.

Each of the two high contracting parties undertakes to accept reference of the question in dispute to arbitration within one month of the date of receipt of the other party of a demand for arbitration.

## ARTICLE 2.

The arbitration shall be undertaken by a committee composed of an equal number of arbitrators, half of whom shall be selected by each of the two parties. A chief arbitrator shall be selected by mutual agreement between the two high contracting parties. If they do not agree in this respect, each of them shall nominate a person, and if either party accepts the person nominated by the other party, the person in question shall become chief arbitrator. If even this cannot be agreed upon, the chief arbitrator shall be chosen by ballot, on the understanding that the ballot shall only be drawn on persons acceptable to both parties. The person chosen by ballot shall become the head of the arbitration committee, and entitled to settle the case. If, however, agreement cannot be arrived at on the persons acceptable to both parties, negotiations shall be carried on until the two parties agree on this point.

## ARTICLE 3.

The selection of the arbitration committee and its chief shall be completed within one month of the date of the end of the month fixed for the reply of the party whose acceptance of arbitration was requested by the other party. The arbitration committee shall meet at a place to be agreed upon within a period not exceeding one month after the expiry of the two months provided for at the beginning of this article. The arbitration committee shall give its award within a period which, in any case, should not exceed one month as from the expiry of the period fixed for the meeting to take place. The award of the arbitration committee shall be given by a majority of votes, and shall be considered binding on the two parties. Its execution immediately after its issue and communication shall be considered obligatory. Each of the two high contracting parties may appoint a person or persons, as he desires, to defend his case before the arbitration committee and to produce the necessary evidence and arguments.

## ARTICLE 4.

The charges in regard to the arbitrators of each party shall be chargeable to their respective parties. The charges of the chief arbitrator shall be chargeable to both parties equally, as well as the expenses of the other investigations.

## ARTICLE 5.

This covenant shall be regarded as an integral part of the Treaty of Taif signed this day, the 6th Safar, 1353, and will remain in force during the period of the validity of the treaty. Written in Arabic, in two copies, of which each of the two high contracting parties is in possession of one.

Signed on the sixth day of Safar, thirteen hundred and fifty-three.

KHALID-BIN-ABDUL AZIZ-AS-SAUD.  
ABDULLAH-BIN-AHMED-AL-WAZIR.



## Annexed Letters.

- (1) *Khalid-bin-Abdul Aziz to his Excellency Seyyid Abdullah-al-Wasir, Plenipotentiary of His Majesty the Imam Yahya Hamiduddin, dated the 6th Safar, 1353.*

(After usual compliments.)

In connexion with the signature of the Treaty of Taif between us and you on behalf of their Majesties the Kings of the Saudi Arab Kingdom and the Kingdom of the Yemen, I wish to confirm in this my letter that this treaty can only be considered and accepted as valid under the following conditions:—

- (1) That the surrender of the Idrisis, the evacuation of our Tihama mountains, and the release of the hostages are completed at once.
- (2) That the contents of this treaty be kept secret and be not published by either party, especially that part concerning the question of the frontiers, on account of the disturbance which might result, particularly in the Tihama. The troops of His Majesty King Abdul Aziz shall be withdrawn in complete safety and with all honour, from the beginning to the end, and any hostile action which may be committed against the troops during that period shall be indemnified by His Majesty the Imam.

With highest respects,

KHALID-BIN-ABDUL AZIZ-AS-SAUD.

- (2) *Abdullah-al-Wazir to His Royal Highness the Amir Khalid, dated the 6th Safar, 1353.*

(After usual compliments.)

I have received your Highness's letter dated the 6th Safar, and noted your Highness's stipulations in respect of the entering into force of the Treaty of Taif, concluded between the two parties, namely the surrender of the Idrisis, the evacuation of the mountains within the country of His Majesty King Abdul Aziz, which were occupied by the troops of the Imam Yahya, the release of the hostages (taken) from its people, and that the treaty should be kept secret, especially the question of the frontiers, until the completion of the measures we have agreed to carry out, and that the troops of His Majesty King Abdul Aziz should be withdrawn in complete safety and with all honour, from beginning to end, and that any hostile action committed against them during the time should be indemnified by His Majesty the Imam Yahya. I have noted all these conditions, and I am glad to inform your Highness that we accept and agreed to them, and that they will be observed on our part.

With highest respects,

ABDULLAH-BIN-AHMED-AL-WAZIR.

- (3) *Abdullah-al-Wazir to His Royal Highness the Amir Khalid, dated the 6th Safar, 1353.*

(After usual compliments.)

I have the honour to confirm, in continuation of the Treaty of Taif which has been signed by your Highness on behalf of His Majesty King Abdul Aziz, and by me on behalf of His Majesty the King, the Imam Yahya, that, in the name of His Majesty the Imam Yahya, I undertake as follows:—

- (1) *The Surrender of the Idrisis to His Majesty King Abdul Aziz.*

The necessary measures have been taken to hand over Seyyid Hasan and Seyyid Abdul Aziz-bin-Muhammad Al Idrisi, who will be handed over immediately to His Highness the Amir Feysal in the Tihama, but as Sayyid Abdul Wahhab-al-Idrisi is still in the Abadil country, the necessary steps have

been taken to bring him down from there, so that we can surrender him. In the event of his disobeying the order, I give the following undertakings in the name of His Majesty the Imam Yahya:—

- (a) The Government of the Imam Yahya will refuse him all moral and material assistance, and will prevent any aid or support reaching him from their country.
- (b) If the Government of His Majesty King Abdul Aziz desire to arrest him in their territories where he is, the Government of His Majesty the Imam Yahya will, on their part, concert every kind of military restriction in their power in order to prevent him from fleeing into their territories, and undertake to arrest him, together with any person from any district or tribe in the Saudi Arab Kingdom who may have joined him in his activities, and to surrender them unconditionally to the Government of His Majesty King Abdul Aziz, in the event of their entering the districts of the Yemeni Kingdom, and to prevent him and any persons who may have joined him in his activities from escaping abroad in the event of their entering the territories of the Kingdom of the Yemen.

- (2) *Those Sharifs and Others who were in any connected with the Idrisis and their activities.*

If these should desire to join the Idrisis, they shall be granted the safety, protection, respect, and regard due to their position, by the Government of His Majesty King Abdul Aziz. If, however, they should not so desire, they shall be expelled from the country of the Imam Yahya and shall not be allowed to remain in it, and, in the event of their returning to it a second time, shall be at once expelled and warned that if they return again they will be handed over to the Government of His Majesty King Abdul Aziz. If they should return again after their expulsion, I undertake in the name of His Majesty the Imam Yahya to surrender them unconditionally to the Government of His Majesty King Abdul Aziz.

I request that your Highness will be good enough to regard this as a firm undertaking having the same value as the treaty concluded this day between us and your Highness, may God be witness of it; I request that this may be considered as confirming the verbal agreement reached between us in this matter.

With highest respects,

ABDULLAH-BIN-AHMED-AL-WAZIR.

- (4) *Khalid-bin-Abdul Aziz to Sayyid Abdullah-al-Wazir, dated the 6th Safar, 1353.*

(After usual compliments.)

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's letter of to-day's date regarding the undertakings which you have given in the name of His Majesty the Imam Yahya relative to the Idrisis and their followers. I am confident that your undertakings will be carried out with the honesty and faithfulness which is expected from His Majesty the Imam Yahya, and we hope that they will be carried out as early as possible.

With highest respects,

KHALID-BIN-ABDUL AZIZ.

- (5) *Khalid-bin-Abdul Aziz to Sayyid Abdullah-al-Wazir, dated the 6th Safar, 1353.*

(After usual compliments.)

In connexion with the signature of the Treaty of Taif between our kingdom and that of the Yemen, I hereby confirm our agreement regarding the movement of subjects of the Saudi Arab Kingdom and of the Kingdom of the Yemen in the two countries, namely, that movements at the present time shall continue as



in the past until a special agreement is drawn up between the two Governments relative to the method which they jointly agree to adopt in regard to the regulations for such movements, whether for pilgrimage, or for trade, or for any other purpose or reason. I hope to receive your reply agreeing in this matter.

With highest respects,

KHALID-BIN-ABDUL AZIZ.

(6) *Abdullah-al-Wazir to His Royal Highness the Amir Khalid, dated the 6th Safar, 1353.*

(After usual compliments.)

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your Highness's letter, dated the 6th Safar, regarding the movement of the subjects of the two parties between the two countries, and I agree with your Highness that movements at present shall continue as in the past until a special agreement is drawn up relative to the regulations of such movements in the future, and that this will be regarded by our Government as it is by yours.

With highest respects,

ABDULLAH-BIN-AHMED-AL-WAZIR.

[E 5333/715/25]

No. 14.

*Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.—(Received August 20.)*

(No. 245. Confidential.)

Sir,

Jedda, August 4, 1934.

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith the Jedda report for July 1934.

2. Copies have been distributed as in the list appended to the report for January.

I have, &c.

A. S. CALVERT.

Enclosure in No. 14.

JEDDA REPORT FOR JULY 1934.

I.—Internal Affairs.

145. Ibn Saud returned from his hunting expedition in the direction of Thamuda at the end of June, and a month later was still at Taif. He has spent much of the month in visits of inspection as well as in sport in the neighbourhood of Taif, and, it is believed, is now anxious to get back to Riyadh, whither his brother Amir Abdullah returned about the middle of the month. Amir Saud remained somewhat disturbingly at the head of certain forces in Najran until the third week in July, when he withdrew to Abha, on his way to Taif; and Amir Feisal, who withdrew from Hodeida at the beginning of the month, at the end was reported to be still at Jizan, or on the point of leaving for Qunfida.

146. The post of Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs changed hands at the beginning of July. Fuad Hamza had been unwell for some time, but latterly had professed to be so completely his own man again, that it was a little surprising to learn of his displacement by Sheikh Yusuf Yasin on grounds of ill-health. On the 8th, Fuad Hamza left for Port Sudan *en route* for Europe, and was seen off by Sir Andrew Ryan at an almost ominously deserted quarantine quay.

147. Two days later Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman returned to this port from Hudeida, rather shaken by the voyage on the steamship *Nasr*, a new unit in Saudi Arabia's miniature mercantile marine, but jubilant at the successful issue to the trial of strength with the Yemen. He was accorded a welcome as notable as Fuad Hamza's departure was unhonoured.

148. Sheikh Yusuf Yasin visited Jedda on the 4th and 19th July, when he met Sir Andrew Ryan and His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires respectively.

149. It is reported that the Saudi Government have recently received a further sum in gold from the Standard Oil Company of California in respect of their Hasa concession. In paragraph 169 of Jedda report for August 1933, the arrival of the sum of £35,000 gold was recorded. The latest payment is said to be £20,000 gold, which together with £30,000 gold of the previous sum, is believed to have been received by the Saudi Government as a loan of £50,000 gold. The odd £5,000 gold is probably an annual sum paid as rent.

150. Nothing further has yet been heard of Mr. Philby's agreement with the Saudi Government. He has remained at Taif, except for a short visit to Jedda at the middle of the month, believed to have been made chiefly with a view to meeting Mr. Twitchell.

151. The latter, whose arrival was reported last month in paragraph 125, left for Taif himself about the 23rd, no doubt with the idea of engaging the Saudi authorities at closer quarters.

152. The pilot and mechanic mentioned in paragraph 121 of last month's report soon got to work, with the result that one of the Wapitis was taken up for trial flights on the 2nd July and succeeding days. On the 5th, apparently having been tested sufficiently, it was flown to Taif, but, unfortunately, on attempting to land there, the pilot, it is alleged, having mistaken a flock of sheep for a landing mark, crashed into a wall and overturned into an adjoining vineyard. The pilot escaped unscathed to return to Jedda for parts to replace a broken propeller, damaged wings and undercarriage. It is not yet known how far he has succeeded in repairing the wrecked machine, but on the last day of July, nothing daunted, he was taking another Wapiti up at Jedda for trial flights, and she, too, is expected to fly to Taif in a few days. In view of all this aerial activity the Government have decided, the *Umm-al-Qura* of the 6th July announced, to establish an aerodrome, which is to be at Taif, rather than at Jedda, for climatic reasons.

153. A number of official communiqués have been published during the month in the *Umm-al-Qura*—

- (a) One provides for the licensing of merchants and professional men, and imposes a graduated tax of from £2 to 5s. gold per annum in accordance with the apparent importance of the individual.
- (b) Another is of considerable importance to claimants to foreign nationality as it fixes a time-limit, a date in February 1935, within which such claims should be established. Points arising out of this question are the subject of correspondence with the Foreign Office.
- (c) Regulations with regard to coastguards form the subject of another.
- (d) A fourth reprints certain sections of the Registration of Companies Regulations, issued in July 1928, as a reminder of the penalties attaching to a failure of companies to register.

154. New schools are to be opened at Mecca and Medina, the *Umm-al-Qura* announced on the 27th July, and a public library is also to be established in Mecca. The project for the foundation of an industrial school there is being studied.

155. Sheikh Kamel-el-Qassab, an ex-Director of Education in the Hejaz, well known both here and, it is believed, in Palestine as a Saudi propagandist, arrived here from Haifa towards the end of the month and proceeded at once to Taif as the guest of Ibn Saud.

156. The Jedda Committee of Virtue, whose moving spirit is perhaps the young Amir, have shown greater activity of late. They sternly called leading members of the Indian Patna Community to account for the heresy of celebrating the "Maulid-an-Nabi" (a charge the Indians denied), and have since destroyed in public a number of gramophones. Whilst there may be a good deal to be said against the Jedda gramophone, this urge to purify and regenerate has extended to the game of football, now banned in Jedda, though not, it is understood, in Mecca. The reasons for this veto are rather curious if it is indeed true that local merchants persuaded the Amir to take this course, not because the game was impure or unvirtuous, but because life is too real and too earnest for so frivolous a pastime which is so much a social leveller into the bargain.

157. The *Umm-al-Qura* of the 20th stated that the Medical First Aid Association propose to establish, at their own expense, a hospital at Taif. This humanitarian project has, it is said, received the sanction of high authority.



158. Mehdi Bey, Chief of Police, has been appointed to take charge of the affairs of the Amirate of Taif, in addition to his own duties.

159. Sheikh Muhammad Id-ar-Rawwaf, First Assistant in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, returned to Taif from leave during the month.

## II.—Frontier Questions and Foreign Relations in Arabia.

160. The evacuation of Hodeida by the Saudi forces, which was proceeding at the latter end of June (see paragraph 129 of last month's report), continued in the early days of July and was complete by the 6th. Contingents were drafted daily north by land and sea, the steamship *Alavi*, for instance, leaving on the 4th with 1,500 men on board. Amir Feisal left by car on the 5th, and Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman in the steamship *Nasr* on the 6th with the remaining troops. The parting of Saudi and Yemeni leaders is stated to have been marked by cordiality on both sides. The Imam's representative, Abdullah-al-Wazir, assumed control of the town, and of Loheya, and gave to the Senior Naval Officer, Red Sea Sloops, satisfactory assurances for the safeguard of British lives and property. The British sloop, H.M.S. *Hastings*, thereupon left Hodeida on the 7th, French and Italian ships leaving the same day, although one Italian ship had sailed on the day before. Saudi troops continued to arrive in Jedda throughout the month, at first from Hodeida and later from Jizan. They were received undemonstratively by the local inhabitants, and were soon whisked off in motor trucks to Mecca and Taif, there to receive *largesse* in the shape of rice and rials, before they returned to their native deserts.

161. Amir Feisal made his way from Hodeida to Jizan, where he remained for the purpose, it was said, of overhauling the local Administration. About the 31st July he left, or was on the point of leaving, for Qunfida and is shortly expected at Jedda. The lengthy silence that has brooded over the presence of Amir Saud in Najran was broken on the 13th, when the *Umm-al-Qura* declared that he was still in that province "supervising certain necessary arrangements" and would postpone his withdrawal until the simultaneous withdrawal of Amir Saif-ul-Islam Ahmad, at the time in disturbingly close proximity to the Saudi Amir, could be arranged. The feverish rumours to which this announcement gave rise were speedily dissipated by the subsequent communiqué of the 27th July, reporting the withdrawal of Amir Saud to Abha *en route* for Taif.

162. (Reference paragraph 132 of last month's report) Seyyids Hasan and Abdul Aziz-al-Idrisi have been allowed to remain in Mecca, where the King is placing a palace at their disposal. Seyyid Abdul Wahhab-al-Idrisi was reported to have reached Taif on the 9th to join his two relatives.

163. Amongst other actors to make their exit from this, it is to be hoped, final scene were the Peace Mission (reference paragraph 128 of last month's report), who finally withdrew from Sana and left the Yemen.

164. Towards the end of the month the appointment was announced of Sheikh Assaf-ibn-Husayn, ex-Amir of Rus, as Amir of Najran and all the territories of Yam. The Saudi authorities, it would appear, are now turning their attention to the administrative consolidation of these territories.

165. During the month congratulatory telegrams were addressed to Ibn Saud by, among others, King Ghazi and Prince Omar Toussoun of Egypt. The message of the former hailed the happy consummation of the struggle with the Yemen in the Treaty of Taif as a step in the direction of unity between Arab nations.

166. On the 17th July the Transjordan authorities informed the Legation that on the 2nd July an armed car patrol unwittingly crossed the Saudi-Transjordan frontier near Haditha. The patrol called at the Saudi post at this place to explain. The Legation expressed officially to the Saudi Arab Government the regrets of the Transjordan authorities at this unintentional transgression of the frontier.

## III.—Relations with Powers outside Arabia.

167. Present cordiality in relations between the British Legation was marked by a Royal invitation to His Majesty's Minister to visit Ibn Saud at Taif. Sir Andrew Ryan, accompanied by Mr. G. W. Furlonge, left Jedda on the 12th and returned on the 14th July, having been given a distinguished reception and much hospitable entertainment. Ibn Saud was gratified to receive

the congratulations of His Majesty's Government on the successful termination of his dispute with the Imam of the Yemen, conveyed to him by Sir Andrew. He evinced a desire for closer relations with His Majesty's Government, and in a series of business talks with His Majesty's Minister discussed a number of the major questions at present under the consideration of the two Governments.

168. Ibn Saud expressed himself with great vigour on the subject of the Qatar boundary of the "blue line" (see paragraph 135 of last month's report). The King most emphatically denied the thesis that the Turkish Government in 1913-14, had any *locus standi* permitting them to dispose of his own ancestral rights. Sir Andrew Ryan hopes to discuss this question upon his arrival in London with His Majesty's Government.

169. The King also adverted to the Koweit blockade, and expressed a desire to reach a settlement on terms advantageous to each party.

170. Ibn Saud displayed considerable feeling over the question of Bahrein transit dues, an attempt, as he conceived it, to boycott the development of Ras Tanura and other Saudi ports in the Persian Gulf. Sir Andrew Ryan essayed to mollify the King, and undertook to discuss the question upon his arrival in London.

171. Whilst at Taif Sir Andrew Ryan received from Ibn Saud a special message of thanks for the helpful attitude of the commanding officers of the Red Sea Sloops of the Royal navy present at Hodeida during the recent troubles. A suitable reply was returned and the message duly conveyed to the officers concerned.

172. Indeed, not only were the relations between the British sloops and such Saudi personages as Amir Feisal and Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman excellent, but so, too, were those established with Abdullah-al-Wazir before H.M.S. *Hastings* finally left Hodeida on the 7th.

173. The final departure of British, French and Italian sloops has been noted in an earlier paragraph. The Italians were less fortunate in their relations with both Saudi and Yemeni authorities, taking a toss over the flag question, over which they had to yield with as good a grace as they could muster and cease to fly their flag ashore; and departing from Hodeida with a snub and sardonic enquiry from Abdullah-al-Wazir whether the Italian doctors Tazzi and Jemecelli were taking so favourable an opportunity as the departure of the sloop afforded to leave Hodeida too.

174. An Abyssinian mission, headed by a Mr. David Hall, arrived here from Addis Ababa via the Yemen on the 1st July and after a short visit to Taif, where they were entertained by the King, they left for Abyssinia on the 15th. They were the bearers of a letter from the Emperor to Ibn Saud, in which the former expressed his sorrow at the outbreak of war with the Yemen and his hopes for its speedy conclusion. It is believed a similar letter was conveyed to the Imam by this mission. Ibn Saud suitably replied and the royal correspondence was duly published in the local press. It is stated that the mission was also charged with proposals regarding a commercial agreement between the two countries.

175. The Russian dentist here, named Morsen, is stated to have accompanied Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman to Hodeida, but in what capacity is not apparent. He returned with the Minister of Finance on the 10th July and is now back at work again in the Soviet Legation.

176. The Diplomatic Body continued to waste away. M. Persico went on two months' leave to Europe on the 8th July, and the French Algerian vice-consul and a junior member in the Persian Legation, temporarily in charge, went later in the month. The latter was replaced by a youth named (?) Salah-ed-Din Falah.

## IV.—Miscellaneous.

177. Sir Andrew and Lady Ryan left for the United Kingdom on leave on the 13th July. They were accompanied as far as Port Sudan by Mr. B. W. Seager, who has now left Jedda, after serving here for some eight years, on transfer to Aden.

178. Mr. G. W. Furlonge sailed from Jedda for Europe on leave pending transfer, after three years at this post.

179. Mr. H. M. Eyres, who has replaced Mr. Furlonge, arrived from Suez on the 1st July.



180. Mr. E. J. Powell, of His Majesty's Office of Works, left for the United Kingdom on the 4th July.

181. Dr. F. Dowdeswell arrived on the 1st July on a visit on his way from London to Kenya, and left again for Port Sudan on the 8th.

182. The problem of destitute Takrunis, referred to in paragraph 142 of last month's report, remains. 120 more West African destitutes presented themselves at the Chancery on the 20th, demanding repatriation, but were called off by their sheikhs. The collaboration of the Italian authorities in respect of Takrunis who can be proved to have come to this country via Massawa has been promised, and the Italian Legation here, now in charge of a clerk, is being approached.

183. The position as regards the manumission of slaves during the month of July was as follows:—

On hand at the beginning of the month: 1 female, 1 child.  
Took refuge in July: 1 male, 1 female.  
Manumitted in July and repatriated: 1 male.  
Locally manumitted: 2 females, 1 child.  
On hand at the end of the month: nil.

[E 5401/22/91]

No. 15.

Colonial Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 24.)

Sir,

Colonial Office, August 23, 1934.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister to refer to the letter from this Department of the 23rd March enclosing a copy of a report by the Resident at Aden on his mission to Sanaa for the purpose of concluding a treaty with the King of the Yemen.

2. As a result of correspondence with your Department and the Resident at Aden, it has been decided that the last sentence of the note on the Anglo-Yemeni boundary, which forms the last annexure to the Resident's report, should be deleted and the following sentence substituted:—

"Beyond this point the boundary, as laid down in the Anglo-Turkish Convention of the 9th March, 1914, respecting the boundaries of Aden and of Ottoman territory in Southern Arabia, is a line running north-eastwards into the Ruba-al-Khali ('the Empty Quarter') at an angle of 45 degrees."

3. The note on the Anglo-Yemeni boundary as now settled, therefore, reads as follows:—

"Article 3 of the treaty stabilises, pending a final decision, the actual frontier existing on the 11th February, 1934, the date of the signature of the treaty. This is as follows:—

"From approximately Husn Murad to the Wadi Bana it is identical with the old demarcated Anglo-Turkish boundary as shown on official maps of the Aden Protectorate. From the demarcated point on the Wadi Bana, eastwards, it follows tribal boundaries which have never been demarcated in detail on the ground, and which the inaccuracy of existing maps makes it impossible to define precisely on paper, but which are known to the tribes concerned. These are the northern and eastern boundary of the Upper Yafa tribe, excluding Rubeiatein, the boundaries between the Upper Yafa, Lower Yafa and Fadli tribes and Beidha, the north-western and northern boundary of the Audhali tribe, the western boundary of the Aulaqi tribe, and the western and north-western boundary of Beihan, including the Masabi country. Beyond this point the boundary, as laid down in the Anglo-Turkish Convention of the 9th March, 1914, respecting the boundaries of Aden and of Ottoman territory in Southern Arabia, is a line running north-eastwards into the Ruba-al-Khali ('the Empty Quarter') at an angle of 45 degrees."

I am, &amp;c.

H. R. COWELL.

[E 5550/148/25]

No. 16.

Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.—(Received September 3.)

(No. 254.)

Sir,

Jedda, August 11, 1934.

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith the usual annual report on the pilgrimage to the Holy Places of the Hejaz in 1934. It has been prepared on the same lines as the report for 1933, enclosed in my despatch No. 241 of the 29th July, 1933.

2. I should like once again to record my appreciation of the excellent work done by the pilgrimage officers, from whose exhaustive reports this general survey has been compiled. Khan Bahadur Ihsanullah, the Indian vice-consul, Haji Abdul Majid, the Malay pilgrimage officer, Dr. Abdul Hamid, the Indian medical officer, and their staffs, together with Captain Seager, all deserve my special thanks.

3. For the reasons given in paragraph 4 of Sir Andrew Ryan's despatch No. 379 of the 2nd September, 1932, namely, the difficulty of getting satisfactory results from the multiplying apparatus in this Chancery at this time of year, copies of this despatch and enclosure are again being sent only to the Government of India (Foreign and Political Department), the Government of India (Department of Education, Health and Lands), and the Government of the Straits Settlements. It will doubtless be circulated in print to other authorities interested in the pilgrimage.

I have, &amp;c.

A. S. CALVERT.

Enclosure in No. 16.

Report on the Pilgrimage of 1934 (A.H. 1352).

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## (1) Introductory and General.

THE pilgrimage season of 1933 had scarcely been numbered with its predecessors when relations between Saudi Arabia and the Yemen became seriously strained. The presence of Hasan-al-Idrisi in the Yemen, recorded in paragraph 2 of the report for last year, inflamed the Imam's deep-seated discontent over the absorption of Asir into Saudi Arabia, and led him to take up cudgels for his protégé in that province, and at the same time to embark on a military adventure in the obscure inland district of Najran, in regard to a part of which Ibn Saud claimed certain rather shadowy sovereign rights. The Imam's

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forces in the latter district pursued a series of desultory engagements with the local tribes of the Beni Yam during the autumn months, but Ibn Saud was careful to refrain from participating in this local conflict.

2. Whilst himself mobilising his forces the King engaged the Imam in protracted negotiations, whose course it is unnecessary to follow more closely than to record that after abortive peace negotiations at Abha in February, when for some weeks the atmosphere had seemed less heavily charged, it was found impossible to avert the outbreak of war early in April 1934.

3. The Saudi forces triumphantly overran the coastal districts of the Yemen and captured Hodeida, so that the Imam, who was also faced with a difficult internal situation, concluded that the better part of valour was to yield. By the terms of the Treaty of Taif, signed on the 20th May, he agreed to surrender members of the Idrisi family, and accepted the Saudi terms in regard to Najran, the Asir frontier, &c. This spectacular manifestation of his strength must do much to consolidate Ibn Saud's position at home, whilst in the Arab world he now occupies an eminence which, since the death of King Feisal of Iraq in 1933, he shares with no other Arab prince.

4. This upheaval in South-Western Arabia had singularly little effect on the 1934 pilgrimage. The patience and restraint with which Ibn Saud pursued his negotiations with the Imam were dictated as much by a desire to allow the forthcoming pilgrimage to develop unmenaced by the hazards of war, as by any other consideration. He successfully staved off the ultimate recourse to arms until pilgrims from all quarters of the Moslem world had arrived, or were on the point of arriving, in the Hejaz. This skilful management of the situation was rewarded by increased numbers of pilgrims from practically all countries concerned, the only exceptions being of minor importance. Of the latter the Yemen, represented only by a handful of Shafei-Yemenis, was, of course, one, but here the figures for last year also were negligible; and, more interestingly, the Persian Gulf generally and Koweit in particular, where the diminution may be directly attributed to the influence of Saudi-Yemen war rumours, for Koweit is the veriest sounding-board of the Arabian Peninsula. Koweit also has been suffering increasingly from the stranglehold of the Saudi economic blockade, and this influence, too, might be expected to have played its part. Bokharans and Afghans also were considerably less numerous this year.

5. On other frontiers little occurred to disturb normal neighbourly relations. The negotiations between Saudi Arabia and Transjordan, referred to in paragraph 3 of last year's report, ended happily in the signature of a treaty on the 27th July, 1933, at Jerusalem; relations with Iraq remained correct and friendly; whilst the Sheikh of Qatar paid a visit, rather enigmatically, to Riyadh in September. Internally, the sky was no less clear, except for strong rumours during the autumn of tribal reluctance to honour the heavy drafts drawn by Ibn Saud on their resources of men and animals for the Yemen front.

6. The total of overseas pilgrims in 1934 was 25,291, a welcome increase over the 20,705 of the previous year, though numbers still lagged behind the figure of 29,065 in 1932, then regarded as very meagre.

7. Pilgrimage Day, the 9th Dhu'l Hijja, fell this year on Sunday, the 25th March. In spite of the increase in overseas pilgrims, the congregation on Arafat numbered, according to Legation estimates, scarcely more than last year, viz., 50,000 inclusive of all local elements, although the Saudi estimate is some 10,000 higher. That this figure has remained stationary must be attributed partly to the effects of the economic depression, in the impoverishment of the Hejaz itself, and partly to the absence of Yemenis.

8. The climate was kinder even than last year, and the health of the pilgrimage was equally good. Saudi medical personnel showed a reduction over last year, details of which will be given later in this report (see paragraph 44).

9. The visions conjured up by the concessions granted the previous year soon faded, and economic depression settled even more heavily over the Hejaz. Revenues contracted in spite of an increased pilgrimage; trade stagnated, with bazaars still containing goods unsold from last year; pilgrims were as meagrely furnished with money as ever; the salaries of Government officials were for the most part unpaid; the State Bank project described in paragraph 7 (a) of last year's report came to nothing; and the Jedda-Mecca Railway dissolved like a mirage. On the other hand, the Standard Oil Company of California (see paragraph 7 (c) of last year's report) intervened with a timely loan of £35,000

gold (believed, however, to have found its way into the privy purse rather than the public exchequer).

10. There was thus no disguising the fact that the general financial situation had again deteriorated. The relief afforded by the oil company's subvention, together with the increased revenues flowing from a pilgrimage larger by 25 per cent. than the year before, failed to offset the evaporation of Government resources due to abnormal military expenditure and a decline in customs receipts, which, together with pilgrim dues, form the staple source of the Government's income, and which were even more heavily mortgaged than before (see paragraph 9 of last year's report). External indebtedness suffered in consequence. The "debt chest" was ransacked to meet domestic needs; and foreign creditors, including His Majesty's Government and the Government of India, still await a settlement. The year, therefore, witnessed greater insolvency at home and badly shaken credit abroad.

11. Nor did the schemes mentioned in paragraph 8 of last year's report present a much more cheerful contrast:—

- (a) The Sharqieh agreement was never effectively carried out, owing to Mr. Philby's difficulties with his principals. In November, therefore, without explicitly annulling the agreement, the authorities made arrangements with Messrs. Gellatly, Hankey and Co. for the delivery of a number of vehicles, granting Mr. Philby a similar contract on like terms a little later. Early in 1934, however, Mr. Philby had sufficiently overcome the scruples of the Ford Company to enable him to supply a further fifty Ford trucks, and in June he was understood to be treating with the Government for the renewal of his agreement on less onerous terms.
- (b) The Hyderabad textile scheme seemed, towards the end of the year, to be a ship sinking under the feet of numerous well-paid officers and an inconsiderable crew. A large part of the exiguous product (costing over 3 rupees per ihram) of this institution, is reported to have been thoughtfully disposed of in gifts to various Saudi officials and notables.
- (c) Negotiations with Messrs. Ibrahim Jewan Baksh in respect of the Mecca public electrical supply appear to have suffered an interruption. Meanwhile, regulations have been published restricting to Moslems the privilege of tendering for the supply of electricity to Mecca, but throwing open to non-Moslems as well eligibility for such services in the ports.

12. Propaganda was vigorously carried on much on the same lines as last year (see paragraph 11 of that report). Jemal Pasha was, it is believed, more discreet as a result of a sharp rebuke from the Saudi Minister of Finance requesting him to avoid the dissemination of misleading information. His activities are said to have included an attempt to collect funds for the establishment of a Moslem University at Mecca and efforts to enlist the interest of wealthy Indians in schemes of development in the Hejaz. A newcomer in propagandist ranks is a certain Dr. Shafi Ahmad, Ph.D., of Delhi. He has already issued a series of pamphlets, containing much erroneous matter, in connexion with the next Haj, but his strong advocacy of the "long-sea" route (preferably by the Mogul Line) as against the overland route, is justifiably regarded by the Indian vice-consul as a saving grace (see paragraph 83 below).

13. Although no change was discernible in Saudi-Egyptian relations, and although there was no likelihood of the "Mahmal" being sent from Egypt for the pilgrimage, interest in the Haj was successfully cultivated in that country, where Talaat Pasha Harb, chairman of directors of Banque Misr, was actively concerned in its promotion. He visited the Hejaz by air in November and concluded an arrangement with the Saudi authorities, the terms of which were not made public, but which were believed to provide for the functions of pilgrimage agent, *e.g.*, payment of Saudi dues, responsibility for transport and accommodation of pilgrims, &c., to be undertaken by the representatives of Banque Misr. At any rate a very satisfactory increase in the number of Egyptian pilgrims resulted, as many as 4,200 travelling by the steamship *Zam Zam* of the Egyptian Steam Navigation Company, a steamer recently acquired by this newly formed company with an eye to the transport of pilgrims. It may also be noted



here that an Egyptian doctor has now been attached permanently to the staff of the consulate here. A further reference will be made later to this, in the appropriate place.

14. Improvements in the conditions in the Hejaz under which the pilgrimage is performed continued, on the whole, to mark time. The hotels mentioned in paragraph 12 (a) of last year's report were still maintained and were fairly well patronised in Mecca and Jedda, though not so well in Medina. The Government rest-houses on the roads were seldom used by pilgrims on account of their excessive charges. The scheme of Sir Nizam Jung to construct caravanserais on the Medina road was left in abeyance, but the sum of 8,000 rupees is still available, and it is hoped that a few rooms may be ready for use by the next Haj. A service of spare motor-lorries, engineers and spare parts, for the assistance of motor traffic on the Medina road, was in operation and will be more fully treated below (paragraph 74 (c)).

15. The inauguration of an orphanage by a philanthropic Indian resident at Medina is reported from that place. The institution is said to provide a free education, along vocational lines, in addition to food and shelter and that it now numbers over 100 boys. It promises to be a beneficial element in that stricken town.

16. During the year Saudi Arabia seems to have advanced a little more confidently upon the sea. In the autumn she reconditioned one motor-launch and purchased two others, whilst in 1934 the "Arabian Steam Navigation Company" was formed and acquired two small steamers from Beirut, destined to ply between the Red Sea and Persian Gulf. This rudimentary mercantile marine was able to play a useful part in the operations against the Yemen, and may possibly be used, in future, for the transport of pilgrims.

17. There was a further fall in the exchange value of the riyal to about 25 riyals to the gold pound, though a temporary improvement to 23 riyals took place, as usual, at the height of the Haj.

18. Prices of food-stuffs in riyals remained about the same as last year, and the general purchasing power of pilgrims was still very low.

19. The high standard of security on the roads was maintained. One or two isolated cases of theft were severely punished. Pilferage was reported to have increased.

20. The King gave his annual pilgrim dinner on the 22nd March. The Indian vice-consul was not invited this year, indeed, the Afghan consul was the only foreign representative present. The Royal discourse was chiefly devoted to his troubles with the Yemen, and concluded with a fervent appeal for help to the Islamic world.

21. Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman, due perhaps to his preoccupations with the Yemen, gave no pilgrimage banquet this year. He was able, however, to entertain various notable foreign pilgrims, including Sir Nizam Jung (who incidentally complained of being inconspicuously placed at the King's banquet), at Taif for ten days. Numerous leading Indian pilgrims were again accorded the privilege of free transport to Medina.

22. The results of the unofficial memoranda submitted by the Indian vice-consul to the King, mentioned in paragraph 17 of last year's report, will be dealt with later in the proper place. The dismissal of the notorious Naqib of Indian Pilgrims at Jedda was its most important sequel.

23. A number of distinguished Indian pilgrims, both officials and others, came on Haj this year. Among them were—

Nawab Sir Nizam Jung Bahadur of Hyderabad, Deccan; Khan Bahadur Aatur Rahman, Officiating Commissioner of Income Tax, Bengal; Khan Bahadur Abdul Aziz, Superintending Engineer, U.P.; Major Khawaj Moin Uddin, I.M.S., Hyderabad, Deccan; Shams-ul-Ulema A.N. Muhammad Waheed, I.E.S., Bengal; Dr. Mahomed Ullah Jung, M.A., LL.D., Barrister-at Law, Allahabad.

The pilgrimage was also notable as probably the first to be attended by unveiled Indian ladies of modern outlook and ideas. These included the sisters of his Highness the Nawab of Cambay, Begum Mahomedullah Jung and Fatmah Begum, lady superintendent of Municipal Girls' Schools, Bombay. The last named, it is worthy of note, was also selected to serve on the Haj Committees on the pilgrim ships *steamship Rizwani* and *steamship Khosru*.

24. In the off-season the only pilgrim of importance was Rashid Ahmad of Delhi, a round-table delegate on his way back to India.

25. In addition to the above list, other notable pilgrims this year were the ex-Sultan of Muscat, his Highness Timur-bin-Faisal and the Emir of Muri from Nigeria.

26. In addition to Hasrat Mohani (see paragraph 21 of last year's report), Muhammad Irfan, general secretary of the Central Khilafat Committee, Bombay, and Akhtar Ali of the *Zemindar*, were the only Indian agitators to perform the pilgrimage this year. Ismail Ghuznavi and Muhammad Khan Ghazi Khan were again absent, but the latter put in an appearance after the Haj, and still remains here in search of employment, as his previous occupation of director of the "Kiswa," a hot-bed of anti-British activity, has been refused him owing to representations made by the Indian vice-consul.

27. Arrangements for the dispersal of the pilgrimage worked less satisfactorily this year in respect of Indian pilgrims. Delays in the arrival of ships cost the companies the sum of about 3,000 rupees in compensation. Further details will be found at paragraph 127.

28. H.M.S. *Penzance* (Commander R. H. Bevan, R.N.) visited Jedda for Haj week. She stayed from the 22nd to the 29th March. Nine Moslem ratings made the pilgrimage during her stay.

29. The question of forged rupee notes remains unchanged from the position described in paragraph 25 of last year's report.

30. The Afghan consul in Bombay was again deputed by his Government for service in Jedda during the pilgrimage. He remained in this country for less than a month, during which time he presented his credentials to the Amir Feisal.

31. Considerable anxiety was aroused during the year by the attitude of the Saudi authorities towards foreign residents in this country, of African and Asiatic race. The activities of the authorities have taken the following forms:—

- (a) Forcing foreign subjects to leave the country.
- (b) Forcing those allowed to remain to accept Saudi nationality.
- (c) Enlisting some for military service.
- (d) Restricting employment as chauffeur to Saudi subjects.

The reasons given for (a) were the growth of the scandal and nuisance of mendicancy, particularly in the Holy Precincts in Mecca, and general lack of employment. The authorities denied the allegations under (b) and (c), and desisted eventually from (a). The question of chauffeurs was one of greater delicacy, but the exigencies of the Yemen war constrained the Saudis to make good a shortage of chauffeurs by re-employing foreigners. A number of Indian tailors in Jedda were also similarly involved, but the Legation was able effectively to intervene on their behalf. The whole question has been, and still is, the subject of close attention by the Legation, by whom representations have been made on numerous occasions.

32. Less expenditure was incurred this year on the weaving of the Kiswa, or cover for the Kaaba. No Indians were brought here for the purpose, Hejazis and domiciled Indians being employed. As already mentioned, Muhammad Khan Ghazi Khan was not re-employed, an Arab director being appointed in his stead.

33. As last year, no case of enslavement of pilgrims came to the notice of the Legation this year.

## (2) Statistics.

34. The following tables give the usual statistical information. The figures given are those prepared by the quarantine authorities, but it should once more be pointed out that discrepancies occur between these figures and those supplied from other sources. It is possible this year to add a further column in Table (A) giving separate particulars of arrivals (by dhow) at Lith. The official figures given hereunder represent the total number of pilgrims who landed at Jedda, Yanbu and Lith, during the period the 17th November, 1933, to the 22nd March, 1934. It will be observed that the largest increases in numbers are from Egypt, North Africa, Persia and China, with slighter increases from India and the Dutch East Indies. Afghans and Bokharans showed the most noticeable diminutions.



TABLE (A).

Number of Pilgrims arriving by Sea and landing at different Ports of the Hejaz, arranged by Nationality.

Nationality.	1933.	1934.	Landed at—		
			Jedda.	Yanbu.	Lith.
India and Far East—					
Indian .. .. .	7,093	7,399	7,358	38	3
Malayan .. .. .	101	173	173	..	..
Dutch East Indies .. .. .	2,316	2,827	2,827	..	..
Chinese and other .. .. .	35	256	254	2	..
Africa—					
North African .. .. .	1,474	2,323	2,138	185	..
Egyptian .. .. .	1,658	4,302	4,231	21	..
Sudanese .. .. .	420	534	530	4	..
West African .. .. .	509	891	891	..	..
Senegali .. .. .	23	43	43	..	..
Somali .. .. .	75	52	52	..	..
Zanzibari and East African .. .. .	1	27	27	..	..
South African .. .. .	37	98	98	..	..
Abyssinian .. .. .	11	13	13	..	..
Arab countries—					
Syrian .. .. .	734	725	473	252	..
Iraqi .. .. .	211	195	145	50	..
Palestinian .. .. .	240	385	229	156	..
Yemeni .. .. .	345	277	277	..	..
Hadhrani and Adenese .. .. .	273	267	250	2	15
Muscati (included in 1934 in Persian Gulf) .. .. .	11	..	..	..	..
Hejazi .. .. .	547	530	500	30	..
Adenese (included in 1934 in Hadhrani above) .. .. .	17	..	..	..	..
Bahreinis .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..
Persian Gulf (includes in 1934 Muscat and Bahrain) .. .. .	179	79	77	..	2
Unclassified .. .. .	1	..	..	..	..
Miscellaneous—					
Afghans .. .. .	2,412	1,720	1,700	20	..
Bukharans .. .. .	1,205	847	828	..	19
Persians .. .. .	607	1,153	972	181	..
Russians .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..
Turkish .. .. .	130	114	30	84	..
European countries—					
Yugoslavians .. .. .	..	31	31	..	..
Albanians .. .. .	..	20	20	..	..
Greeks .. .. .	..	10	10	..	..
Total .. .. .	20,705	25,291	24,217	1,035	39

## NOTES.

- (a) In addition to the above total of overseas pilgrims, there were also 800 Iraqis, who travelled by overland routes and returned the same way; 526 Indians, who also arrived overland but returned by sea; and over 250 Persians, who came overland via Iraq, the majority of whom returned by sea.
- (b) Forty-three Indians this year arrived by the overland route by motor from India, and of their number twenty-eight returned by the same route.

TABLE (B).

Number of Pilgrims arriving in the Hejaz by Sea, arranged by Countries of Embarkation.

Country of Embarkation.	1933.	1934.
India and Far East—		
India .. .. .	10,920	10,169
Malaya .. .. .	515	836
Dutch East Indies .. .. .	2,024	2,477
Africa—		
North Africa .. .. .	853	1,770
Egypt .. .. .	3,315	5,759
Sudan .. .. .	999	1,798
Eritrea .. .. .	76	105
East Africa .. .. .	..	..
South Africa .. .. .	51	196
Arab countries—		
Syria .. .. .	1,243	1,618
Iraq .. .. .	355	3
Yemen .. .. .	..	..
Aden .. .. .	344	542
Hadhranaut .. .. .	..	..
Miscellaneous—		
Persia .. .. .	..	..
Russia .. .. .	5	2
Europe .. .. .	5	16
Total .. .. .	20,705	25,291

TABLE (C).

Number of Ships transporting Pilgrims to the Hejaz and number of Pilgrims carried under each Flag.

Flag.	1933.		1934.	
	Number of voyages.	Number of pilgrims.	Number of voyages.	Number of pilgrims.
British .. .. .	44	16,017	177	15,933
Dutch .. .. .	4	2,024	11	2,022
French .. .. .	3	1,916	4	2,432
Italian .. .. .	16	388	73	503
Soviet .. .. .	5	360	4	5
German .. .. .	..	..	8	8
Egyptian .. .. .	..	..	4	4,388
Total .. .. .	72	20,705	281	25,291

NOTE.—The statement supplied by the Foreign Ministry, on which the above table is based, is for the whole Arabic year 1352 A.H., i.e., from 26th April, 1933, to 15th April, 1934; but the actual number of voyages during the season—17th November, 1933, to 22nd March, 1934—is 195 only.



## (3) Quarantine.

35. The usual quarantine measures were instituted at Kamaran, Tor and Suakin during the year under review.

*Kamaran.*

36.—(a) The amendment of the Indian Merchant Shipping Act providing compulsory vaccination and inoculation produced satisfactory results and considerably improved conditions. No infectious case occurred on any ship. A child suspected of measles, on board the steamship *Rahmani*, before its arrival at Karachi, was isolated on board, but at Karachi the case was declared to be of a non-infectious character, and measures were taken to revaccinate and inoculate the child. Only three deaths occurred on Indian ships during outward voyages, and two births were also reported.

(b) Accordingly, no ships from India, the Dutch East Indies and Malaya were detained for more than the time necessary for medical examination, nor had any pilgrim to land at Kamaran for quarantine purposes, although 282 were landed for disinfection. One of the chief causes of the exceptional good health observed by the Director of Quarantine on Indian ships, may be attributed to the introduction of the compulsory food system (see paragraph 139).

(c) In view of the declaration of the Saudi medical authorities, verified by the Indian medical officer and the representative of the International Quarantine Board, that the pilgrimage was clean, His Majesty's Minister was able to dispense ships returning to India and Malaya with calling at Kamaran. But the presence of small-pox or chicken-pox in the Hejaz, led Sir Andrew Ryan to issue instructions to the Indian medical officer to ensure that pilgrims should not embark unless properly vaccinated and inoculated. Similar instructions were also conveyed to the ships' doctors. As a result three Takruni pilgrims were refused embarkation on the Khedivial Mail Line ship proceeding to Suakin, and one Indian on an India-bound ship. The Legation medical officer vaccinated and inoculated 455 persons proceeding by Indian pilgrim ships during the year under review, in addition to the number done at the local Government vaccination station opened at Jedda this year. In respect of the latter, Dr. Abdul Hamid was asked to satisfy himself that they had been regularly vaccinated and inoculated.

*Tor.*

37. Returning pilgrim ships were subjected to the usual detention of three days. The Alexandria Quarantine Board declared the pilgrimage clean on the 9th April.

*Suakin.*

38. Pilgrims returning to Africa via the Sudan underwent the usual five days' detention at Suakin. Two cases of small-pox occurred, but they were quarantined as usual, so that no cause for apprehension arose.

*Jedda.*

39. No quarantine measures were necessary in respect of pilgrim ships or pilgrims this year.

40. The Port Medical Service was maintained by one doctor only. The senior, Dr. Yahya, went on leave, *vide* paragraph 41 of last year's report, and did not return. His assistant, Dr. Ibrahim Adham, acted single-handed as the Director of Quarantine during the year under review. During a short absence in Mecca, the local Medical Officer of Health acted for him. The Legation staff was not altogether happy again this year in regard to the performance by Dr. Ibrahim Adham of his duties in respect of pilgrim ships. He was, however, less disagreeable and obstructive than in the past.

41. Dr. Abdul Hamid Qassim came to Jedda as representative of the Alexandria Quarantine Board. He went to Mecca to perform the pilgrimage, but perhaps on account of the unfriendly terms subsisting between him and the Saudi Director-General of Public Health, no official recognition was accorded to him as representative of the board by the local medical authorities.

42. The projected opening up of an overland route for motor traffic from Iraq to the Hejaz will necessitate the inauguration of a quarantine station at a

suitable centre. Indian pilgrims who arrived by motor this year were detained by the authorities at Khanikin for a few hours, for examination of their travel documents and certificates of inoculation and vaccination.

## (4) Health.

*General.*

43. Health conditions, as far as pilgrims were concerned, were good during the 1934 season, and climatic conditions were as favourable as the year before. As will be noted below (paragraph 51), the general health of the inhabitants of this country was by no means so satisfactory.

*Saudi Medical Service.*

44. There was a considerable decrease in the total of medical personnel compared with 1933. With an increased pilgrimage and dislocation due to transfers to Asir for service with the Saudi forces, this can scarcely be regarded as satisfactory. The following is the distribution during the season, based on a list supplied by the Indian medical officer, except for transfers to Mecca for temporary service at the climax of the pilgrimage:—

*Mecca.*—Six, including the Director-General of Public Health, a dentist, a midwife, and a surgeon who remains for most of the year in Riyadh.

*Jedda.*—Three, including one quarantine doctor and a lady doctor. The third doctor was sent to Jizan before the pilgrimage season began, and handed over his duties in connexion with the Jedda Hospital to his quarantine colleague.

*Medina.*—One doctor.

*Taif.*—One, but he was transferred to Army Headquarters at Abha before the pilgrimage season.

*Yanbu and Wejh.*—A quarantine doctor at the former. The latter quarantine post has now been closed and the doctor removed.

*Riyadh.*—Three, including the Royal physician. They all were transferred to Mecca for the height of the pilgrimage season.

45. This total of 15 (inclusive of the Royal physician and Riyadh staff, in comparison with 19 exclusive of those officers in 1933) comprises 9 Syrians, 3 Egyptians, including the 2 women, 2 Hejazis and 1 Turk. All but one are understood to have qualified in Beirut. The number of private practitioners showed some increase; the Dutch doctor, however, left for Holland upon completion of his contract. No change was reported in regard to pharmacists.

46. Hospitals, &c., maintained a starved existence. The following particulars supplement those given in paragraph 46 of last year's report:—

*Mecca.*—Only the central hospital and that at Gabban were in use. The condition of the former was much the same. The X-ray room has still to be brought into use, and the analyst's room has not yet been built. Dr. Mahmud Hamdi is active, however, in improving the hospital grounds. The isolation sheds outside the city were again unused, Gabban being used instead.

*Jedda.*—Remained for most of the year, and still is, without a doctor in charge. Nothing further has been done about a new hospital, but certain minor improvements are being made in the old one. It is said that the engagement of three Syrian doctors and two bacteriologists from Stambul has been sanctioned.

*Taif.*—Dispensary has been without doctor for six months.

*Hasa.*—Is still given over to the chauffeur-medico.

47. The Indian medical officer reports that the observations made in last year's report at paragraph 47 in regard to the defective medical service in this country, on the one hand, and the misleading accounts of it given in the Saudi pilgrimage guide, apply in their entirety and with even greater force this year. All pilgrims were charged for medicines, except those from whom charitable gifts were expected. The Government is said to have allocated £600 gold for



the purchase of medicines, and to have levied, in Mecca only, a tax of 1 Saudi piastre per day on shopkeepers. There was the usual lack of smallpox vaccine in Mecca, but this year Jedda was more fortunate in this respect.

48. The following statement of cases treated and deaths in Government hospitals during the twelve months, the 1st June, 1933, to the 31st May, 1934, has been prepared by the Indian medical officer from weekly returns published in the local press:—

Disease.	Number of Cases.	Deaths.
Dysentery	1,624	49
Paratyphoid	6	4
Typhoid	19	13
Puerperal fever	44	32
Smallpox	194	146
Measles	12	12
Meningitis	13	2
Leprosy	2	...
Syphilis	1,270	9
Diphtheria	2	1
Malignant fever	...	...
Dengue	66	...
Consumption	173	76
Chicken-pox	12	...
Tetanus	...	...
Whooping cough	56	15
Influenza	49	...

It is difficult to institute a comparison with last year's figures as those related to ten months only. Nevertheless, Dr. Abdul Hamid is of the opinion that smallpox, measles, meningitis, syphilis, dengue and consumption are increasing, but the cautionary remarks in paragraph 49 of last year's report apply with equal force.

#### *Disease during the Pilgrimage Season.*

49. Although smallpox was present amongst the local inhabitants of Mecca and Jedda, pilgrims appeared to remain unaffected by this and other infectious diseases, one case of smallpox only, a Bengali, being detected and rejected by the steamship *Jehangir*. Chicken pox was present during the actual pilgrimage, the Indian medical officer noticing two cases amongst Indians, two Javanese and three rejected by a Khedivial mail ship. Four cases occurred on the steamship *Jehangir*, bound for India, and two on a Khedivial mail ship bound for Suakin.

50. After the Haj a few cases of dysentery and diarrhoea, chiefly amongst Sindhi destitutes, were noticed. Influenzal catarrh was, however, more common, and malaria showed no decline, which, in view of the elementary sanitary arrangements here, is not a matter for surprise. No cases of sunstroke were observed at Arafat or Muna, but cases of heatstroke were successfully treated.

51. The general health of the local inhabitants has been far from good. Measles and whooping cough have scourged almost every family, and chicken-pox, influenza, dysentery, diarrhoea, acute conjunctivitis and stomatitis have been much too prevalent. Much of the latter complaints may be attributed in part, Dr. Abdul Hamid considers, to infected local water supplies (see paragraphs 55 and 56 below).

#### *Mortality.*

52. The death rate this year is estimated by the Indian medical officer at not more than 0.03 per cent. for Indians and others, as against 0.8 per cent. for 1933. At Arafat one death only occurred, that of an enfeebled person, and at Muna deaths did not exceed a total of sixteen.

#### *General Sanitary Conditions.*

53. These, briefly, may be described as lamentable. Conditions recorded in paragraph 54 of last year's report, in regard to the absence of latrines, particularly at Muna, the disposal of carcases, prevalence of mosquitoes, &c., were worse this

year, although the Indian medical officer states that, in one respect, viz., the use of phenyl at Muna, there was some improvement. There was no rain and a violent sand and dust storm aggravated the state of affairs. Dr. Abdul Hamid also alleges relaxation in Mecca of municipal control of bread and other food shops during Haj weeks, so that not only does the unfortunate pilgrim suffer in his purse but, as the food is less carefully inspected, in his stomach too.

54. The temperature of Haj Day was a little higher than last year at from 89° to 96° F.

#### *Water Supply.*

55. Conditions in Mecca were much the same this year, though at Arafat and Muna water was dearer, probably due to increased demand, the price rising to 10 piastres a tin of 4 gallons.

56. The Jedda water-supply from (a) the sea-water condenser, (b) the "Saharij" or rain-water reservoirs, and (c) well-water was this year supplemented by (d) water from Waziriyeh. In paragraph 57 of last year's report this was pronounced normally healthy at source, as a result of tests applied by the Indian medical officer. Further tests during the autumn showed that the water arrived in the town cistern considerably polluted after having traversed 7 miles of conduit, a part of which was decayed and clogged with detritus. Further work by the Ain Zubeyda Committee in the catchment area served to increase the volume of water, the flow in course of time sweeping the conduit clean of the accumulated rubbish. The pipe itself was also cemented and repaired, with the result that further tests at the beginning of 1934 revealed that the water now arriving in the Jedda cistern, although rather too saline for a sensitive palate, is reasonably safe. The local committee bestirred itself, money was collected and philanthropic Indian notables, among others, Sir Rahim Baksh and Sheikh Muhammad Amin Brothers, Calcutta, gave financial assistance, whilst Jewan Baksh promised to provide metal piping to convey the water gratis to various distributing points in the town. Consignments of pipes have already arrived or are *en route*. One of the distributing points will be the Quarantine Quay, a facility which may be expected to be of great benefit to pilgrims. The precaution of boiling Waziriyeh water, or of mixing a few grains of potassium permanganate with each bucketful is, however, advised by Dr. Abdul Hamid.

#### *Government of India Dispensaries.*

57. The Jedda Dispensary remained open as usual throughout the year, with a staff augmented this year by an additional dispenser, fourth grade, and a sweeper (see paragraph 39 of last year's report). More ambitious proposals for separate hospital accommodation were submitted to the Government of India, but were not accepted owing to the present financial stringency. The increased indent for medicines was this year queried by the Government of India, but after minor adjustments was substantially allowed. Certain improvements, e.g., tiling, whitewashing, &c., were carried out during the year.

58. The Mecca Dispensary opened on the 20th January and closed on the 20th May, Dr. Hamid Husain, who served in a similar capacity in 1930, being appointed sub-assistant surgeon. His work and that of his staff was again satisfactory. Arrangements for Haj week, including attendance at Arafat and Muna (where the Indian vice-consul and Indian medical officer were obliged to hire a house at their own expense), were similar to those for the previous two years.

59. The attitude of the Director-General of Public Health towards the Mecca Dispensary, adverted to in paragraph 60 of the report for last year, gave rise to a sharp passage with the local authorities this year. His studied discourtesy towards Dr. Abdul Hamid, when the latter was in Mecca to open the dispensary, was followed by an ultimatum to Dr. Hamid Husain to produce his diplomas, in default of which further action was promised. His Majesty's Minister took the matter up with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, but no reply having been received from Amir Feisal (indeed, in the meantime, the Director-General had weighed in with an even stiffer communication to Dr. Hamid Husain), Sir Andrew Ryan telegraphed to Ibn Saud complaining of the conduct of Dr. Mahmud Hamdi. The King replied that he was causing an enquiry to



be made. The question of the dispensaries generally was the subject of subsequent conversations between Sir Andrew Ryan and Fuad Hamza and Sheikh Yusuf Yasin, but the position remains to be cleared up as this report is being prepared.

#### Cases Treated in the Indian Dispensaries.

60. The total number of cases treated at the Jedda Dispensary from the 1st June, 1933, to the 31st May, 1934, was 42,500 as compared with 44,914 for the previous twelve months. Of these, the number of Indian pilgrims treated at Jedda between the 8th December, 1933, and the 31st May, 1934, was 4,841, as compared with 4,625 of last year. The number of cases treated at Mecca from the 20th January to the 20th May was 13,109, as compared with 12,125 last year. During a three days' stay at Muna, 210 cases were treated.

61. Indoor cases this year totalled forty-seven, as compared with thirty-four last year. The remarks in paragraph 62 of last year's report in this connexion still apply, as the new fourth grade dispenser is not able to undertake the work of a qualified anaesthetist. Dr. Abdul Hamid performed 360 major operations and 2,864 minor operations during the year under review.

62. The observation contained in paragraph 63 of last year's report apply in respect of this year as to a comparison in numbers treated in the Indian and the Saudi medical institutions. The total amount collected from patients for medicines supplied amounted to 559 riyals.

63. The following table shows the percentage of the various diseases treated in the Indian dispensaries during the year ended the 31st May, 1934:—

Medical—	Percentage.
(1) Malaria and its complications ... ..	30.75
(2) Other fevers and infectious diseases ... ..	1.34
(3) Urinary diseases, including syphilis and gonorrhoea ... ..	12.91
(4) Digestive troubles ... ..	8.34
(5) Circulatory diseases ... ..	0.62
(6) Respiratory diseases ... ..	6.11
(7) Nervous diseases ... ..	3.29
(8) Diseases of the locomotory system ... ..	2.50
(9) Women's diseases ... ..	2.46
(10) Children's diseases ... ..	2.97
(11) Eye, ear, nose and throat diseases ... ..	4.51
(12) Deficiency diseases ... ..	0.43
Surgical—	
(13) Sinuses, fistulae, ulcers, &c. ... ..	19.25
(14) Wounds and other contusions ... ..	4.03
(15) Hydrocele and hernia ... ..	0.09
(16) Cystitis, stone, &c. ... ..	0.40
Total ... ..	100.00

64. The practice, noted in paragraph 65 of last year's report, in respect of a charge of 5 rupees to cover cost of transport on visits being made to patients in their own quarters was followed again this year.

65. The difficulty with regard to dispensing outside prescriptions (see paragraph 82 of 1932 report and paragraph 67 of 1933 report) occurred again this year. The Indian medical officer, in refusing such requests, explained the reasons for this attitude.

#### Other Foreign Medical Assistance.

66. The Egyptian consulate, as recorded at paragraph 13, has now a medical officer, Dr. Ali Asghar-al-Ghandour, as permanent member of the staff. He has been here eight months and still awaits medical supplies and instruments. The Indian medical officer hears of somewhat unhappy ventures in diagnosis that, it is said, have marked his professional debut here. The Egyptian medical mission was again in Mecca for not more than one month, and dispensaries were also maintained at Muna and Arafat for a short time. The Afghan mission was as rudimentary as last year (see paragraph 70 of last year's report).

67. The Dutch doctor, Hartman, terminated his contract at the end of 1933 and was replaced by Dr. Abdur Rahman, a Javanese who spends all his time in Mecca, the Dutch dispensary in Jedda having been closed.

68. A new Russian doctor named George arrived in the summer of 1933 and works in association with Mme. Touraculoff, the Minister's wife, a lady doctor. The Russian dentist practised here until he accompanied, it is said, the Saudi Minister of Finance to Hodeida in April or May.

#### Medical Arrangements on Pilgrim Ships.

69. The amended Indian Merchant Shipping Act of 1933 and the Indian Pilgrim Ship Rules have effected certain improvements in medical arrangements on board ships. For further reference to the Act, and such matters as the compulsory food system, see paragraphs 139 *et seq.*

#### (5) Internal Transport in the Hejaz.

##### Motor Transport.

70. In spite of the obvious importance of the conveyance of pilgrims to the Holy Cities by motor, the Indian vice-consul reports that little has been done during the 1934 pilgrimage to improve the condition of rolling-stock and its equipment. He criticises the action of the Government authorities in using motor vehicles, imported by them for military purposes, in competition with the motor transport companies. The Government, by registering their vehicles with the "Naqaba," or motor transport administration, were able thus to participate, to the extent, it is estimated, of one-third of the total, in this business at the expense of the regular companies. The latter, severely handicapped financially by the operations of a governmental competitor, were unable to effect renewals in and the reconditioning of their rolling-stock, and were obliged to run worn-out vehicles on the rough-and-ready roads of this country. Khan Bahadur Ihsanullah describes the subterfuge, which consisted chiefly in the transfer of equipment, &c., from one car to another, by which companies were able to evade the not very rigorous official inspection of vehicles at the beginning of the season.

71. This unsatisfactory state of affairs inevitably spelt discomfort, delay and even hardship for pilgrims. Further difficulties experienced by them, in connexion with motor transport, may be summarised as follows:—

- (a) With an eye to revenue, the authorities, the Indian vice-consul avers, permitted Medina-going pilgrims to leave Mecca first, and arranged for them to take the best transport. Thereupon, those anxious to return home at once after visiting Mecca were allowed to leave in the sadly dilapidated vehicles remaining. Not only were transport companies themselves exposed to difficulties and loss, but pilgrims suffered considerable hardship, one party being as long as three days over so short a journey.
- (b) Delays also took place, in respect of vehicles bound for Medina, on the stretch Mecca-Jedda, in spite of the special examination such vehicles are supposed to undergo before leaving Mecca. Efforts, in a number of cases, were made by the Indian vice-consul to have cars changed at Jedda for the onward journey to Medina.
- (c) Owing to the war with the Yemen and the demand for chauffeurs for military transport, and further, owing to the Government's policy of excluding as far as possible chauffeurs of foreign nationality from employment, transport companies were obliged to engage inexperienced persons to drive their vehicles, a fact which accentuated the discomfort of the pilgrims. Even though the authorities relaxed the regulations with regard to foreign chauffeurs, many of these had left the country and, the demand exceeding the supply, wages increased, especially for trips to Arafat, for which short distance chauffeurs were paid up to £4 gold.
- (d) Complaints were made of the inclusion of pilgrims of several nationalities in one bus-load.
- (e) In order to earn a gratuity from motor owners, muzawwars are said to have brought pressure to bear on pilgrims to leave Medina before the completion of the prescribed observances.



- (f) An Indian pilgrim was reported to have been killed by a bus on the Jedda-Medina road, but no particulars have been received to enable further investigation. The driver is said to be still in prison at Medina.
- (g) No special arrangements were made this year for the hotels to run cars for their clients.
- (h) Khan Bahadur Ihsanullah reports a singular case of double-dealing. A Punjabi chauffeur, a favourite of Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman, was granted a free "Koshan" in 1933 for thirteen members of his family to visit Medina. But the chauffeur, instead of utilising it for himself, sold the permit to a party of thirteen Indian pilgrims of Delhi, whom he passed off as his family, and provided them with a bus outside Naqaba control, through the intermediary of a sabee. The pilgrims duly travelled to Medina, but the fraud was discovered on their return journey, when the chauffeur was arrested and the party detained at Medina undergoing serious hardship. Subsequently, on reference of the case to the Minister of Finance, the pilgrims were allowed to return on the same bus, whilst the offending chauffeur is said to have escaped with a warning.

72. As in 1933, pilgrims generally were allowed to go from Mecca to Arafat by motor. The charges were as last year, per car and per bus, instead of per pilgrim, viz., £13 gold for a bus, and £9 and £6 gold for six- and four-seater cars respectively.

73. In view of the difficulties experienced this year in connexion with motor transport, the King summoned, after the Haj, a special meeting of notables of Mecca and Jedda, owners of motor companies, representatives of the Majlis-as-Shura and the Ministry of Finance, to study the question and consider remedial measures.

74. Of the various proposals embodied in a memorandum of Khan Bahadur Ihsanullah (see paragraph 79 of the 1933 report), the following matters connected with motor transport may be noted:—

- The proposal to construct a shed at the entrance gate at Mecca was not pursued, the Minister of Finance being, it may be supposed, too heavily engaged with the war with the Yemen.
- The proposal that "Koshan" officials should note times of arrival and departure of vehicles was partially adopted.
- Arrangements for the assistance of transport on the roads were further developed. Three spare lorries with mechanics were stationed at Rabigh and Masajid, and one each at Dahban and Bir Ibn Husayn. New stations, with three lorries each, were also opened at Mastura and Bir Sheikh on this road, whilst the usual repair stations, &c., were opened on the Jedda-Mecca road. Soldiers were also posted, after the Haj, at difficult points on this road.
- Arrangements for the inspection in Mecca of vehicles bound for Medina were also tightened up, and delays at Jedda were greatly reduced.
- The need for a "sabee" to accompany each bus of pilgrims to Medina, again became the subject of consideration and some complaint. The question of excluding the sabee from buses was not pressed, as the present system has certain advantages.

75. It is estimated that about 60 per cent. of the Indian pilgrimage visited Medina in motor vehicles this year.

#### Camels.

76. There is little of fresh interest to report. Economic depression still leads considerable numbers, both for Mecca and Medina, and much larger numbers for Arafat, to travel by camel.

#### Cabs.

77. Again, on the representation of the cab-owners, the Government prohibited the general use of buses and lorries in the town of Mecca during the months of Dhu 'l Qaada and Dhu 'l Hijja of the year under review. An exceptional treatment was, however, granted this year in respect of cars, which

required no permission to enter the town. Buses carrying pilgrims of favourite mutawwifs or those of other notables, it was noticed, were also allowed to enter the town, on the permission of the chief of police.

#### Dhows.

78. The arrangement between Messrs. Turner, Morrison and Co. and the authorities in India for the conveyance of pilgrims and their luggage between ship and shore, having expired this year, the Government of India were asked to sanction the continuance of the system for a further two years. Certain modifications were suggested for incorporation in the new contract, based on the experience of the past two years.

#### General.

79. Again no attempt was made to prevent pilgrims from travelling on foot between Mecca and Jedda, and many of the poorer pilgrims did so travel. But the prohibition against footing it to Medina was strictly enforced, and two domiciled Sindhis were imprisoned for acting as guide, taking pilgrims to Medina by short-cuts.

80. Motives of economy still led a few hundred pilgrims to postpone their trip to Medina until after the reduction of the "koshan" (see paragraph 81 of last year's report). A Government announcement that this reduction would only be made in favour of Saudi subjects, was eventually relaxed on telegrams of protest being addressed to the King.

81. Indians, resident in Medina, were deprived this year of the privilege of visiting Mecca during the Haj on the same reduced "koshan" rates as for Saudi subjects. In consequence, many who could not afford the higher rates either stayed away or travelled by camel. The Minister of Finance who was approached by the Indian vice-consul, promised sympathetic consideration next year of a request for the restoration of this privilege.

82. One car- and two bus-loads of Indian pilgrims for the first time arrived from India by land all the way. They suffered many vicissitudes, and, to their great chagrin, were late for the pilgrimage. They addressed complaints both to this Legation and to the local authorities; some returned by the same means, some remained in the Hejaz, while a number returned by sea to prefer claims against the motor company on arriving back in India. Khan Bahadur Ihsanullah attributes this ill-starred expedition to the activities of Ismail Ghuznavi.

83. Agreement over the overland route from Iraq, referred to in paragraph 84 of last year's report, has now been reached, it is reported, between the Saudi and the Iraqi Governments. Very considerable developments and changes in the transport of pilgrims to this country may be expected to follow.

84. Once again two adventurous Indians came on pilgrimage on bicycles. They failed to get as far as Medina and had to dispose of their machines. Both men returned to India by sea, one as a destitute and the other with the help of charitable friends.

#### (6) Customs.

85. There was no change in the year under review in administration of the customs. Smuggling was still active and venality more pronounced, the latter due to the fact that Government officials for a large part of the year received no salary. This proved of no little benefit to pilgrims, who, with the help of judicious gratuities, experienced less trouble this year. Complaints were, however, received of confiscation of cigarettes, leaf-cigarettes ("biri") and betel nuts, and in some cases of somewhat sharp practice by mutawwifs.

86. Numerous amendments to the Saudi customs tariff were announced on the 15th June, 1934. The new duties, whose effect it is at present difficult to assess, represent a further development of the new tariff introduced in May 1933, many lacunae being filled by the designation of specific duties on articles previously not separately shown or subject to *ad valorem* duties. Duties on certain important commodities, e.g., rice, wheat and flour, have been standardised, and, it appears probable, will bring in an increased yield of revenue.



## (7) Religious Policy.

87. The tendency, noted in paragraph 90 of last year's report, towards a more liberal attitude to other than Wahabi sects of Islam happily continued during the year under review. Many pilgrims are said to have visited the "Ghar-al-Hara, Ghar-al-Thor," hitherto forbidden, and Khan Bahadur Ihsanullah relates that a few rivals to the Nejdi guard enabled an educated Indian pilgrim to visit the tomb of the Lady Khadija the Great, by night. Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman again expressed his anxiety that causes for annoyance to other sects should be removed, whilst the Committee of Virtue now chastise neither with whips nor scorpions.

88. This atmosphere of harmony and quiet has been disturbed by one or two incidents of no particular significance:—

- (a) A certain Moulvi Ahmad Dehlavi, now settled in Medina, delivered himself, in the Haram there, during the pilgrimage rush season, of some bitter diatribes against non-Wahhabi sects. He was severely assaulted by outraged Sunnis and Shias, but was rescued by the police, his assailants being arrested and punished.
- (b) A lady of modern ideas and culture, the wife of an Allahabad barrister, Dr. Mahomedullah S. Jung, LL.D., M.A. (see paragraph 23 above), had secured the privilege of kissing daily the Holy Railings at Medina by payment of a regular gratuity to one of the Nejdi guards there. This did not save her, it would seem, from receiving three blows of a cane from another guard. She refused to pursue the matter further.
- (c) The Patna community in Jedda, who have a mosque of their own, recently celebrated the ceremony of "Moulad an Nabi." As a result, two leading members of the community were summoned to the police station, and seriously warned.
- (d) Two separate cases are reported of Takruni sheikhs, well known for witchcraft, being expelled from the country.

89. The Indian vice-consul alludes to the intolerance displayed by Indians of the Wahhabi persuasion, domiciled in this country. He attributes this to the bitter memories of the treatment received by them in India at the hands of Moslems of other sects.

## (8) Mutawwifs.

90. There was no change of cardinal importance in mutawwif's organisation during the twelve months under review. The recommendations of the Indian vice-consul, in consultation with the Minister of Finance (see paragraph 107 (a) of last year's report), received the Royal approval, and it was hoped that the matters adverted to in paragraph 120 of the 1932 report and paragraphs 107 and 108 (b) of the 1933 report would be remedied. One immediate result was the removal of the notorious "naqib" of Indian pilgrims at Jedda, who is also himself the wakil of a large number of Indian mutawwifs (he had under his charge no less than 11,000 pilgrims one season). He was given the alternative of keeping either the agency of Indian mutawwifs only or that of non-Indians. He chose the latter, and his Indian agencies were in consequence distributed amongst other wakils.

91. The ex-naqib, however, could not stomach being so unceremoniously ejected, and during the Indian vice-consul's absence on leave during the summer of 1933, succeeded in climbing back into his old saddle. He was assisted in this by the common knowledge that Khan Bahadur Ihsanullah had been the instrument of his fall, and by the feeling he was in consequence able to stir up by references to unwarranted interference by foreign representatives in matters of domestic concern to Saudi Arabia. Khan Bahadur Ihsanullah persevered, however, through the Minister of Finance, and eventually secured, by Royal order, the dismissal of the naqib, who, however, managed through the influence of Amir Feysal to retain his agencies until the season was over, to avoid any dislocation.

92. The adoption of the recommendations mentioned in paragraph 108 (b) of last year's report, in respect of pilgrims not returning to their countries at

the end of the first season, proved a decided advantage in minimising both expenditure and delay.

93. The question of the conduct of mutawwifs, &c., in India was also the subject of further exchanges. A Royal injunction, endorsing the Indian vice-consul's recommendation, was first issued and then later withdrawn. The Legation thereupon issued visas of limited validity only, until the Minister of Finance took up the matter again, and, after His Majesty's Minister had communicated with the Government of India on the subject, Khan Bahadur Ihsanullah was able to agree with Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman upon the terms of a cautionary instruction to mutawwifs. The Legation now prefers to wait until the behaviour of mutawwifs whilst in India becomes the subject of further remark.

94. The active intervention of the Indian vice-consul in the question of the mutawwif system becoming public property had at least the salutary effect of inducing in mutawwifs and their wakils a more amenable spirit. This, and the black-list, which has been maintained as usual this year, are useful as sanctions to curb the more disagreeable tendencies of these persons.

95. The following instances of misconduct by mutawwifs are cited by Khan Bahadur Ihsanullah:—

- (a) Anticipation of a reduced pilgrimage led to numerous instances of the nature mentioned in paragraph 99 (a) of last year's report.
- (b) There were again cases of the taking of loans and dues in advance by mutawwifs. On receipt of complaints, however, the wakils were compelled to refund the amounts so taken.
- (c) Amongst cases of loss of luggage investigated, was one concerning the loss of a trunk, said to contain 1,000 rupees. Enquiries here failed to trace the trunk, but a cable to a ship which had sailed a day earlier led to the discovery of the trunk on board.

96. Difficulties were again experienced this year in connexion with the payment of dues in advance at Jedda. Poor pilgrims attempted to evade payment and were detained, in some cases for weeks. Khan Bahadur Ihsanullah, who discouraged this evasion, recounts how a party of Sindhis, who cleverly handed their pilgrim passes and return tickets to other pilgrims on board for custody and landed as destitutes, were neatly foiled by the local authorities, who soon persuaded them to produce the missing documents by threats to return the offenders to India forthwith as stowaways.

97. There was no change in the Taqir system. Complaints were received of the inconvenience resulting from several mutawwifs for one family, whose members happened to reside in different districts of Behar.

98. The appointment of a separate Sheikh of Mutawwifs for Indian pilgrims (see paragraph 102 of last year's report) proved of great help to the Indian vice-consul in dealing with complaints against mutawwifs at Mecca.

99. Indian pilgrims of the Shia faith are allotted to a different Sheikh of Mutawwifs from other Indians. Some difficulty arose this year in this respect, and the Minister of Finance promised Khan Bahadur Ihsanullah that for the future he would place Shiah Indians as well as the others under one Sheikh of Mutawwifs.

100. Several complaints have again reached the Indian vice-consul of the misconduct of certain of the muzawwars of Medina against Indian pilgrims. These could not be closely investigated as no arrangements have yet been possible for Khan Bahadur Ihsanullah to visit that place.

## (9) Pilgrimage Tariff and Cost of Pilgrimage.

101. The Saudi Minister of Finance's intimation, recorded at paragraph 122 (a) of last year's report, that the 1933 tariff would probably be applied in 1934 without substantial alteration, was borne out by the event. The only difference consisted of the cancellation of the remission of Zamzam water fees in respect of Malabar, Sindhis and Afghans, yet these, on arrival, were exempted from payment of these fees in advance at Jedda, and were allowed to pay them at Mecca. Very few, in fact, paid in full; many paid nothing at all.



102. The Legation were enabled to circulate on the 17th October the general tariff, privately received from the Minister of Finance, to the Government of India and other British Governments interested in the pilgrimage, and were also enabled to prepare, as last year, an estimate of the probable cost of the pilgrimage. The latter was forwarded to the Government of India on the 8th October, and was subsequently reproduced in the guide for pilgrims, published by the Government of India early in 1934.

103. The adoption of the recommendation noted at paragraph 122 (c) of last year's report proved of great advantage and eliminated a fruitful source of complaint in the past, viz., that pilgrims were compelled to sit on their luggage in Jedda waiting for an indefinite ship to arrive, when they might have been spending the time more pleasantly in Mecca.

104. The question adverted to in paragraph 122 (b) of last year's report, namely, to make Jedda wakils responsible, in return for a small fee, for pilgrims stopping the night at Jedda whilst *en route* between Medina and Mecca, was not pursued, in view of the improvement in the arrangement for inspecting transport described in paragraph 74 (d) above.

105. The proposal to separate that part of a mutawwif's fees destined for the Government from the portion he would retain, referred to in paragraphs 122 (d) and 123 of last year's report, was not pursued.

106. The suggestion, urged by Khan Bahadur Ihsanullah, that a definite fee for muzawwars at Medina should be fixed, could not be pursued. Complaints, however, have again been received and in the absence of sanction for the vice-consul to proceed to Medina such steps as are possible will be taken with the Minister of Finance.

107. The two active propagandists in India of the Saudi Government, namely, Ismail Ghuznavi and Jemal Pasha El Ghazi, restrained their propensity to contradict the published tariff. Certain complaints were, however, heard that the latter had been representing the cost of the pilgrimage to be less than the published minimum. Perhaps, as a result of this, a number of pilgrims arrived here with insufficient funds.

108. The same difficulty noted in paragraph 120 of last year's report, in respect of the payment of dues in advance, arose again this year. Khan Bahadur Ihsanullah reports that as a result of a private understanding with the Minister of Finance, he was able to arrange that all cases of genuine destitution should eventually be allowed to go to Mecca. These, however, had to wait on the settlement of the undeserving cases, who were detained in Jedda until the dues were forthcoming. This, of course, meant the detention of the destitutes as well and the Khan Bahadur records his embarrassment at the spectacle of fellow countrymen reduced to mendicancy in the streets of Jedda (also see the last sentence of the previous paragraph).

109. A further difficulty arose over the insistence of Indian pilgrims in paying their Government dues in Indian currency, as published in the guide. It has, of course, been emphasised more than once that the items of the Saudi tariff are fixed in terms of gold and that any change in the exchange value of gold would substantially alter the estimates. This, however, is sometimes not easy for the average pilgrim to understand, but the Indian staff of the Legation endeavoured to make the point clear. When the estimates were prepared the market rate was 20 rupees to the gold £, but when Pilgrimage Day approached the rate was nearer 23½ rupees.

110. The tariff, once again, did not include charges for motor transport from Mecca to Arafat and back. They were fixed shortly before Pilgrimage Day at inclusive rates, which are given at paragraph 72 above.

111. Transport charges for Medina were the same as those for last year. As many as 300 pilgrims again postponed their visit there until the usual reduction of "Koshan" and motor fares, as long as two months after the Haj (see paragraph 80 above). Khan Bahadur Ihsanullah would counsel poorer pilgrims not to spend their substance in waiting in Mecca for a reduction that one of these years might not materialise. Many pilgrims again travelled to Medina on single tickets.

112. Domiciled Indians at Mecca, as well as those pilgrims who remained in this country since last year, were treated on the same footing as citizens in the year under review, and enjoyed the privilege of reduced rates of "Koshan" for

Arafat and Muna, and also for Jedda. The question of domiciled Indians in Medina has been dealt with in paragraph 81 above.

113. An unofficial attempt was made by the members of the Waziriyeh Committee to arrange with the wakils at Jedda to collect a sum of one-fourth of a rupee from each pilgrim, together with the local dues, &c., as a subscription for the Waziriyeh Fund. This report reached the Indian vice-consul, who opposed the proposal that any sum, even for charity, should be collected from pilgrims in such a manner.

#### (10) Indian Pilgrimage.

114. In paragraph 124 of last year's report, His Majesty's Minister proposed to review, early in 1934, the position reached in regard to questions concerning the Legation, as a result of consideration of the Haj Enquiry Committee's reports and the Legation's annual reports. But, due to the pressure of other work and the recent war in Arabia, it is regretted it has not been possible for him to pursue the matter. Sir Andrew Ryan, however, has addressed several despatches to the Government of India regarding various questions of Indian pilgrimage, which will be mentioned in the appropriate paragraphs below.

115. The Indian Pilgrimage began this year with the arrival of the steamship *Jehangir* on the 7th December, 1933, and ended with that of the steamship *Rizwani* on the 19th March, 1934.

116. The following table shows the number of pilgrims from each province of India and from Ceylon, classified according to ports of embarkation:—

#### British Subjects.

Province.	Total No. of pilgrims in 1933.	In 1934.			
		Bombay.	Karachi.	Calcutta.	Total.
Bengal and Assam .. ..	559	423	5	239	667
Punjab .. ..	1,551	87	1,723	1	1,811
Bombay Presidency .. ..	1,069	1,125	3		1,128
United Provinces .. ..	1,139	821	194		1,015
Madras .. ..	324	188	1		189
Sind .. ..	439	2	463		465
Behar and Orissa .. ..	184	93	14	2	109
Central Provinces .. ..	427	430	81		511
Belochistan .. ..	193	1	196		197
N.W. Frontier Province ..	223	72	222		294
Hyderabad (Deccan) .. ..	335	476	5		481
Delhi .. ..	219	7	168		175
Burma .. ..	48	20	4	23	47
Nepal .. ..		1			1
Ceylon .. ..	7	3			3
	6,697	3,749	3,079	265	7,093

117. The discrepancy between the foregoing total and that given in paragraph 34 above is due to the fact that the figures in that paragraph include Indian pilgrims from embarkation ports other than those in India, and the present statement has been compiled from lists of pilgrims, whereas those in paragraph 34 have been compiled from information supplied by the quarantine authorities. This table puts the total number of pilgrims from British India, the native States and Ceylon at 7,093, as compared with 6,697 of last year. In order to facilitate comparison between the number of pilgrims this year and last, the figures for 1933 have also been shown in the above table. It would appear that the arrivals from the Punjab showed an increase, and that in spite of several earthquakes in the provinces of Behar, no marked diminution in numbers of pilgrims hailing from that part of India was noticeable.



118. The following list shows the number of non-Indian pilgrims who travelled to the Hejaz via Indian ports:—

	Bombay.	Karachi.	Calcutta.	Total.
Chinese (Turkestan) .. ..	37	611	..	648
Afghans .. ..	65	1,571	..	1,636
South Africans .. ..	5	..	..	5
Russian Turkestan .. ..	7	20	..	27
Persians .. ..	20	5	..	25
Hejaz-Nejd subjects .. ..	169	54	18	241
Malayans .. ..	2	..	..	2
Arabs from Persian Gulf .. ..	34	41	..	75 <sup>(1)</sup>
Miscellaneous .. ..	22	..	..	22
	361	2,302	18	2,681

(1) Thirty from Dubai, 12 from Bahrein, 24 from Muscat, 5 from Koweit and 4 from Iraq.

119. Any difficulty in reconciling the foregoing figures with those in paragraph 34 is due to causes similar to those indicated in paragraph 117 above. The total is 2,681 as compared with 3,996 in 1933. Afghans, Arabs from the Persian Gulf and pilgrims from Chinese Turkestan were mainly responsible for the decrease. Persians have abandoned the route via India to the Hejaz since last year; the coastal Arabs have also adopted the overland route instead of travelling via India.

120. According to information obtained from mutawwifs, the numbers of Indian pilgrims who arrived from other than Indian ports, as well as of those who left by other routes, were as follows:—

	Arrivals.	Departures.
Suez .. ..	88	75
Port Sudan .. ..	6	..
Beirut .. ..	12	59
Aden .. ..	11	66
South Africa .. ..	66	14
Dutch East Indies and Malaya .. ..	2	..
Zanzibar .. ..	..	30
Suakin .. ..	..	2
	185	246

In addition to the above, forty-three Indian pilgrims arrived by motor vehicles from India; and 526 on foot via Nejd, Yemen, Iraq and Palestine, who were repatriated eventually at the expense of the Government of India.

121. The Mogul Line (Messrs. Turner, Morrison and Co.) was again the only line engaged in the pilgrimage traffic from India this year.

122. The following table shows the movement of return traffic with details of the number of ships available on given dates for repatriation of pilgrims, the number of pilgrims awaiting repatriation and the number actually repatriated:—

Date.	Number of ships in port.	Pilgrims awaiting embarkation.	Pilgrims despatched.	Pilgrims remaining.	Remarks.
1934—					
April 4 .. ..	4	4,618	1,394	3,224	Khosrou.
April 5 .. ..	3	3,224	1,028	2,196	Jehangir.
April 6 .. ..	2	2,327	1,649	678	Rehman.
April 14 .. ..	1	1,639	1,531	8	Rizwani.
April 27 .. ..	1	1,507	1,394	213	Khosrou.
May 7 .. ..	1	1,811	1,028	783	Jehangir.
May 23 .. ..	..	1,038	1,038	..	Alavi.
June 14 .. ..	..	851	851	..	Jehangir.

123. The following table shows the number of ships run, voyages effected and pilgrims carried by the Mogul Line:—

Outward from India.			Homeward to India.		
No. of ships.	No. of voyages.	No. of pilgrims.	No. of ships.	No. of voyages.	No. of pilgrims.
5	11	9,840 <sup>(1)</sup>	5	8	10,013 <sup>(2)</sup>

(1) The discrepancy between this figure of pilgrims arriving in the Hejaz and that given in paragraph 34 above is due to the fact that the figures supplied by the shipping companies were for the actual season of the Indian Pilgrimage, beginning the 7th December, 1933, while the Quarantine Department gives the number of all Indians, including even of those who arrived from India during the non-pilgrimage season; in addition, there was also a difference on account of children.

(2) This figure includes 541 destitutes who came overland, including 15 of those who travelled in motor vehicles but returned by steamer; and also 97 Hachramis who either arrived by other ships or had been resident in the Hejaz. To this a further number of 329 can be added, those who came from India during the non-pilgrimage season and returned after the Haj. If these numbers be deducted from the figure for homeward bound pilgrims, the disparity between it and the number of arrivals amounts to 794, made of 449 persons whose return tickets are still held in deposit in the Legation, and 345 others, mainly Hejazis returning from India and remaining in the Hejaz, or pilgrims who went northward to visit other holy places.

124. The following table shows the distribution of the totals given in the preceding paragraph by ports of embarkation and destination. Owing to the introduction of the compulsory food system, it has been possible this year to give the exact number of pilgrims who returned to Bombay or Karachi:—

Port.	Pilgrims embarked.	Pilgrims returning.
Bombay .. ..	4,123	4,040
Karachi .. ..	5,383	5,803
Calcutta .. ..	286	..
Aden .. ..	48	45
Mokallah .. ..	..	125
	9,840	10,013

125. The following is a statement of the number of pilgrims who purchased single and return tickets in India, or deposited the amount of the return passage:—

Port.	Deposit.		Single.		Return ticket both Indian and Foreign.	Total.
	Indian.	Foreign.	Indian.	Foreign.		
Bombay .. ..	4	..	4	155	3,960	4,123
Karachi .. ..	27	8	7	5	5,386	5,803
Aden .. ..	..	..	..	..	48	48
Calcutta .. ..	3	..	..	16	267	286
	34	8	11	176	9,611	9,840

126. In view of the importance of the question of deposit *versus* return ticket system, which has formed the subject of protracted correspondence, the above table has been extended a little in order to give the number of pilgrims who deposited the amount of the return passage money or who came on single tickets, both of Indian and foreign nationalities. While it is satisfactory to note that the number of single ticket is only eleven, a negligible percentage, yet it is a matter for regret that the number of pilgrims in the category of deposit-paid is not more than thirty-four Indians.

#### Return of Pilgrims to India: General.

127. Although the number of arrivals this year from Indian ports was a few hundred more than last year, arrangements for the return journey were less



satisfactory. Pilgrims, who arrived at Jedda after the first rush was despatched, had to wait here for a longer period. On the sailing of almost each ship after the steamship *Rizwani* on the 14th April, some hundreds of pilgrims had to see with disappointment steamers sailing with full complement, and they were left behind due to the lack of accommodation. The table at paragraph 122 above shows the interval between the sailing of each ship and the arrival of the next, in respect of the last three ships, as ten, sixteen and twenty-two days respectively. The shipping company concerned had even to pay a fine of 2,992 rupees for the detention of 704 pilgrims awaiting repatriation, whose period of detention was as follows:—

No. of Pilgrims.	Detention period.	Allowance paid for.
9	22	7
213	21	6
131	20	5
141	14	4
98	18	3
26	17	2
86	16	1

128. Besides the above figure of 704, which includes Indians only, there was a number of foreign pilgrims also detained, but who were unable, of course, to claim compensation under the amended Act. Although their number was not large this year, the Legation was nevertheless approached by these persons, who felt aggrieved at the differential treatment accorded to pilgrims travelling from the same ports and under similar circumstances. It is feared that, if a larger number of foreign pilgrims, travelling from Indian ports, were to be detained here in future years, considerable difficulty may be anticipated, both to them and to the representative of their Government, especially in respect of Afghans.

129. As a result of the inadequacy of the shipping company's fleet of ships for the transport of pilgrims to India, a number of seventy-five pilgrims, who travelled to the Hejaz with Mogul Line return tickets, tired of their prolonged stay at Jedda, obtained refunds, and booked passages by an Italian ship bound for India via Massawah. They were, however, refused embarkation on that ship at the eleventh hour. Some of them proceeded to India via Aden, and the others remained at Jedda, to be treated as fresh purchasers of tickets having lost claim to their original return tickets.

130. Besides the above, the general attitude of the local Italian company was responsible for other incidents. Some Indian pilgrims who intended to travel to Zanzibar or other ports by their ships, and were booked as cabin passengers, were ultimately compelled to travel as deck passengers. They made representations to this Legation, but nothing could be done to assist them.

131. Many better-class pilgrims, who travelled with first- or second-class return tickets, took up a good part of the Indian vice-consul's time by their persistent requests to book their passages by telegram, &c., in advance, in contravention of the established rotation system. Khan Bahadur Ihsanullah tried to explain to them the difficulties and undesirability of complying with their requests, with but indifferent success in some cases.

132. The adoption of the recommendation mentioned in paragraph 103 above proved a great relief to the better-class pilgrims, who returned to Mecca and remained there till the arrival of their ships.

133. The proposal of Messrs. Turner, Morrison and Co. to arrange for the building of a special ship accommodating a large number of first- and second-class passengers, which it is expected will be launched in time for the next pilgrimage, will, it is hoped, help to remove the difficulties of the pilgrims of the above category in this respect. The number of pilgrims holding first- and second-class tickets, who elected to travel in a lower class this year, in order to avoid delay, fell this year to twenty. The Indian vice-consul again attributes this in part to the fact that some pilgrims, aware of the difficulties in the past, preferred to travel from India to Jedda on single tickets, and partly to the fact that some pilgrims, having obtained refunds on their return tickets, travelled by different routes.

134. Some difficulty was experienced this year in respect of pilgrims who desired to obtain refunds on their return tickets from the local shipping agents,

and to travel by other routes. The agents of the Mogul Line, who also represented the new Egyptian Steam Navigation Company, a competitor of the Khedivial Mail Line, wanted to book these pilgrims by the former against their wishes; and, accordingly, to the resentment of pilgrims, withheld the refunds in order to include the amount in the fresh passage. However, the Indian vice-consul took suitable measures to prevent this.

135. Complaints were received, both from pilgrims and from members of the Committee of Pilgrims on the ships, regarding the difficulties of re-embarkation at Jedda. The solution of this problem was to fit four ladders instead of two, as suggested to the Government of India. Unfortunately, Messrs. Turner, Morrison refused to comply with the proposal, although the much smaller ships of the Khedivial Line, employed in the Red Sea for the transport of pilgrims, carry four ladders. The usual unseemly scramble to secure good places can also be avoided by a stricter adherence to Rules 69 and 70 of Indian Pilgrim Ship Rules, 1933.

136. Other complaints made by the persons mentioned in the above paragraph were in connexion with the luggage, lack of accommodation on the ship and the extortion by dhowmen. The latter point has been taken up with the Government of India (see paragraph 78 above). As regards the congestion made by unnecessarily bulky luggage, measures to discourage pilgrims from carrying with them heavy luggage would be most useful, whilst a stricter observance of the rule for keeping luggage in the ships' hold would materially assist. Pilgrims should be allowed to keep with them only the necessities for the voyage.

137. Minor complaints were received from a number of pilgrims who had children with them. The shipping company in India issued half-tickets in several cases to children below 12 years of age, while many were charged at full rates, even for children of the age of 3 years.

138. The Indian Section of this Legation issued 582 emergency passes to pilgrims without other papers, in accordance with the arrangements mentioned in paragraph 171 of 1932 report.

#### Food.

139.—(a) For the first time in the annals of the Indian pilgrimage, the system of compulsory food on board the pilgrim ships was introduced in the year under review in accordance with amendments to the Indian Merchant Shipping Act. In this first year of experiment, several defects were apparent in the operation of the system, and vigorous protests and complaints were received from pilgrims arriving by each ship, as well as from the members of the Committees of Pilgrims. Cases of hunger-strike, passive resistance and active opposition occurred in some ships. The Government of India were kept telegraphically informed, and it was suggested that certain remedial measures should be taken. Similar grievances were also aired in the homeward-bound ships, as was apparent from reports of the Committees of Pilgrims. His Majesty's Minister expressed his views on this question in a separate despatch to the Government of India of the 8th June last.

(b) The shipping company issued "food tickets" for both journeys on one sheet of paper, and many instances came to the notice of the Legation of the loss of these tickets. It appears from the experience gained this year that it would be preferable to issue separate single tickets for each journey.

(c) The local shipping agents issued fresh tickets "without food," on the homeward-bound pilgrim ships, to persons travelling to Aden and Mokallah. The question as to whether this is a contravention of the provisions of section 208 (B) (2) of the Act is under consideration.

#### Amirs-al-Haj and Committees of Pilgrims.

140.—(a) No provision was made for the appointment of an Amir-al-Haj, on any of the first six ships of the year under review. The attention of the Government of India was drawn to it in the Legation's telegram referred to in paragraph 139 (a) above. All subsequent ships, commencing with the steamship *Jehangir*, which arrived at Jedda on the 6th March, carried Amirs-al-Haj, or, in one instance, a Committee of Pilgrims.

(b) On return voyages, it was considered preferable to appoint for each ship a Committee of Pilgrims, of from three to five members, instead of a single



Amir-al-Haj. Accordingly, committees were formed consisting of educated pilgrims travelling by each ship. Their reports as received here from the Bombay Port Haj Committee are useful documents, although somewhat overloaded with recommendations concerning matters beyond their competence (see paragraph 147 of last year's report).

#### Pilgrim Passes.

141. The new form of pilgrim pass, as amended by the Indian Pilgrim Ship Rules 1933, was introduced this year. Although Part II of it is necessary for the purpose of counterfoil in cases of "deposit paid," the Indian vice-consul suggests it is unnecessary in the case of return ticket holders. In handling, they proved bulky on being deposited with the return tickets for safe custody at this Legation. There were minor matters, e.g., the issue of type-written passes on flimsy paper, which will be taken up separately in due course.

#### Refunds on Deposit Paid Passes.

142. The Indian Pilgrim Ship Rules, 1933, authorised this post to make refunds of deposits made by pilgrims in India forthwith, on receipt of applications. Subsequently, the Government, at the suggestion of this Legation, approved of the system of drawing the necessary amounts on any leading firms at Jedda, having correspondents in India, in return giving them drafts for the amounts drawn on the executive officer concerned, and issuing simultaneous notification, bearing the number of the draft, to that officer for his information.

#### Registration.

143. The Legation arrangements continued to work satisfactorily, and 6,930 of the 7,399 Indian pilgrims shown in paragraph 34 as having arrived by sea registered at the Legation, the deficit being accounted for by pilgrims who evade the local dues, and by some of those who arrived by the last ship and hurried to Mecca. However, those who did not register here were detained for a few days so as to serve as a warning to them and to their wakils; eventually they were given the usual privilege of the "rotation system" in view of their poverty.

144. Sixty-eight unclaimed or unused return halves of tickets and deposit paid passes of 1933 were forwarded to the Commissioner of Police, Bombay. Applications received thereafter for refunds or return to India are being dealt with in accordance with the instructions conveyed by the Government of India in their letter of the 27th April, 1933.

145. Two Indian pilgrims who had not deposited their return tickets at this Legation and eleven foreign pilgrims reported the loss of their return tickets to this Legation. Arrangements similar to those described in paragraph 179 of 1932 report were made for all cases, to enable them to obtain passages.

146. The question referred to in paragraph 153 of last year's report, of which a further example occurred this year, concerning the payment of loans from refund amounts on the return tickets of debtors, was finally decided by the Government of India, that any refund should only be paid to the pilgrim himself, or to his nominee or legal representative.

147. Khan Bahadur Ihsanullah states that he would again be grateful for the collaboration of the authorities in India (see paragraph 154 of last year's report) to ensure accuracy in the compilation of the lists of pilgrims travelling to the Hejaz, to whom pilgrim passes are issued by the pilgrimage authorities in India. This year the particulars have often been incomplete and inaccurate.

#### Local Haj Committee.

148. The local Haj Committee, mentioned in paragraph 157 of last year's report, was again constituted as usual, under the presidency of the Indian vice-consul, for the purpose of regulating return passages to India. It sat at the house of the Indian vice-consul and did useful work.

149. The arrangements for the Hyderabad Pilgrimage were again satisfactory this year, under the supervision of an experienced retired sessions judge, as "Kafila Salar."

150. There was again one stowaway this year from India. The Saudi Government returned him by the same ship, without allowing him to perform the Haj.

#### Destitutes.

151. There was a considerable increase in the number of destitutes this year over 1933, the figures being 560 as against 353; which may be accounted for in the main by the fact that the number of those who came overland was greater in proportion to the total, being 531 this year as against 263 last year. The following tables give an analysis of the figure for this year by (a) provinces of origin, and (b) routes of access to the Hejaz:—

##### (a) Provinces of origin—

Bengal	...	...	130
Sind	...	...	208
Punjab	...	...	98
Beluchistan	...	...	24
North-West Frontier Province	...	...	17
United Provinces	...	...	19
Central Provinces	...	...	4
Delhi	...	...	3
Bombay	...	...	2
Madras	...	...	34
Assam	...	...	12
Burma	...	...	4
Ceylon	...	...	1
Hyderabad (Deccan)	...	...	3
Central India Agency	...	...	1
			560

##### (b) Route—

###### (1) Overland—

Via Yemen	...	...	87
Via Mokallah	...	...	66
Via Nejd	...	...	38
Via Gwadar	...	...	308
Via Iraq	...	...	12
Via Muscat	...	...	12
Via Palestine	...	...	8
			531

###### (2) By sea—

Bombay	...	...	14
Karachi	...	...	10
Calcutta	...	...	3
...	...	...	2
			29
			560

152. The authorities in India were again able to get a quotation of 40 rupees per head, excluding food and conveyance charges, direct from Messrs. Turner, Morrison and Co. for the repatriation of destitutes. A sum of 854 rupees was collected from twenty-six of the individuals repatriated, who seemed able to contribute, in part, to the cost of their return. The actual amount expended on behalf of the Government of India was 27,910 rupees.

153. The usual precautions were taken to guard against fraud, to provide the authorities in India with lists of the persons repatriated and to take from each an undertaking to repay the money expended.

154. The Government of India was asked in a despatch to devote further consideration to the measures necessary for the control of pilgrims travelling on foot overland.



### Publicity.

155. The Government of India, as usual, issued a further edition of the *Guide for Pilgrims to the Hejaz*, which contained information of the greatest utility to pilgrims.

### Banking Facilities.

156. There has been no change in the position described in previous reports. The principal banking concerns in Jedda are still the Netherlands Trading Society, which has branches in India, and Messrs. Gellatly Hankey and Co., whose correspondents there are the National Bank of India. The Legation again deprecates the use of "Hundis."

157. Requests were again made by several leading pilgrims to make arrangements to cash drafts and make payments at Mecca and Medina. The amount of cash deposited by the pilgrims, in the safe custody of this Legation, amounted to 30,233 rupees this year.

### Indian Staff.

158. The staff of the Indian Section consisted of the Indian vice-consul and two permanent clerks, and was reinforced as usual during the pilgrimage season by the employment of three temporary clerks. All worked with their customary industry and efficiency. A change in personnel took place when the second clerk, Seyyid Ghulam Reza, reverted to his original post in India on account of ill-health, and Mr. Iqbal Din, B.A., of the North-West Frontier Secretariat, was seconded for service here.

### (11) Afghan Pilgrimage.

159. There was a notable fall in the number of Afghan pilgrims, being 1,720, as against 2,412 last year.

160. The majority of these pilgrims again travelled from India on return tickets or deposit-paid passes. There were very few destitutes amongst them, and these, as usual, were repatriated by local charity.

161. The Afghan Government detached their consul at Bombay for service in Mecca during the pilgrimage season, as last year. This gentleman, Seyyid Abdul Hamid, arrived here on the 16th March, 1934, in the company of their medical officer, Dr. Hashmy, an Indian. The former left for India on the 27th April, 1934. During the period of his stay in the Hejaz, Seyyid Abdul Hamid discharged virtually no consular functions, although he presented his credentials to Amir Feisal. He spent most of his time in a visit to Medina. Dr. Hashmy carried out his medical duties for a very short period at Mecca, and left for India on the 5th April, 1934.

162. The Afghan clerk, who was left in charge of work last year, is an experienced man, and carried out the usual duties, having his office in the Afghan hostel at Mecca. No house was again rented this year for the consular office at Jedda, and the consul lived as the guest of certain local personages.

163. The Afghan Minister in Cairo, Sheikh Muhammad Sadiq Mujaddedi, visited this country on Haj, and remained in Mecca during the Haj period. He also visited Medina.

164. Although one or two persons of the pro-Amanullah party were present in the Hejaz, no special activity in furtherance of their cause came to notice this year.

### (12) Malay Pilgrimage.

#### Shipping (outward from Malay Ports).

165. The season commenced with the sailing of the steamship *Lycan*, of the Blue Funnel Line, from Singapore on the 11th November, 1933, with 547 pilgrims on board. Two other ships of the same line followed, the last of which arrived at Jedda on the 1st March, 1934. The total number of pilgrims carried in these three ships was 991, of whom 572 embarked at Singapore and 419 at Penang, and included, as usual, pilgrims of Dutch, American, Saudi and other nationalities, in addition to British Malays.

### Number of Pilgrims.

166. The total number of registered pilgrims from British Malaya was 173. Their distribution by places of origin was as follows:—

#### Straits Settlements—

Singapore	...	...	...	9
Penang and Province Wellesly	...	...	...	23
Malacca	...	...	...	9
Labuan	...	...	...	0

#### Federated Malay States—

Perak	...	...	...	36
Selangor	...	...	...	2
Negri Sembilan	...	...	...	17
Pahang	...	...	...	20

#### Unfederated Malay States—

Johore	...	...	...	30
Kedah	...	...	...	11
Perlis	...	...	...	0
Kelantan	...	...	...	8
Trengganu	...	...	...	7
Brunei	...	...	...	1

Total ... 173

167. Although this number was more than 72 per cent. higher than that of last year, when the total number was 101, it was yet very far below normal; and if a comparison be instituted with the highest figure on record, viz., in 1927, when there was a total number of 12,173, it was a mere 1.42 per cent. of that number.

### Feeding on Board Ship.

168. This may be considered satisfactory, in that there were no complaints from pilgrims. This was borne too out by the Malay pilgrimage officer's personal observations during the journey from Singapore to Jedda, as a result of which he reports that the food was supplied according to his recommendations submitted in 1930.

### Charges and Cost of Pilgrimage.

169. The general nature and effects of the Saudi pilgrimage tariff are again discussed in a separate section of this report. The approximate rate of exchange this year was 24½ riyals = £1 gold = 14 Straits dollars on the average.

170. The following is an estimate of the minimum expenditure incurred this season by a Malay pilgrim from Malaya and back to Malaya (reference paragraph 178 of last year's report). It depends on a diversity of factors, and must be accepted as an approximation only:—

#### Visit to Mecca only.

	Saudi official tariff Pt. Mirl gold.	Straits dollars.
(1) Transport from house to port of embarkation, either Singapore or Penang, say ...	...	5
(2) Return ticket Singapore-Jedda (including Saudi entrance tax and landing charges) ...	...	182
(3) Pilgrim-broker's fee, house-rent, and transport of luggage at port of embarkation, say ...	...	10
(4) Boat-hire, transport of luggage, house-rent and municipal dues in Jedda, and fees of Jedda wakil and naqib ...	...	31



	Saudi official tariff Pt. Miri gold.	Straits dollars.
(5) Transport, Jedda-Mecca by camel, at 110 Pts. per camel, seating two persons, per person ...	55	
(by bus, per person £G1)		
(by car, per person £G1½)		
(6) Shuqduf hire, Jedda-Mecca ...	31	
(7) Transport of luggage, say ...	55	
(at £1 gold per camel)		
(8) "Duit-Jamu," i.e., inclusive charge, covering sheikh's fee, food and house-rent at Mecca, food at Arafat and Muna, tent at Muna, tent hire at Arafat, water, lamps, service, head sheikh's fee, Ain Zubeyda and Zamzam fees, and other Mecca dues ...	660	
(9) Transport, Mecca to Muna and Arafat and back to Mecca, by camel, at £G1 per camel seating two persons, per person ...	55	
(by bus, £1 gold; by car, £G1½)		
(10) Transport, Mecca-Jedda by camel ...	55	
(as per No. 5)		
(11) Shuqduf hire, Mecca-Jedda ...	31	
(as per No. 6)		
(12) Transport of luggage, say ...	55	
(as per No. 7)		
(13) Transport of luggage and house dues at Jedda on return, say ...	11	
(14) Maintenance for stay of between three and five months in the Hejaz, say ...		125
(15) Gifts, &c., which all pilgrims must buy, say ...		10
Totals ...	1,039	332
1,039 gold Pt. Miri, at average value during 1934 season of 110 gold Pt. Miri = £G1 = \$ 15, is equivalent to about ...		142
Total for Mecca only ...		474

*Additional Expenses if Medina be also Visited.*

(16) Transport, Mecca to Medina and back to Mecca or Jedda, by camel ...	632½ = about	86
(by bus, £G10; by car, £G15)		
(17) Expenses in Medina, including house-rent, Muzawwar's fee (not officially fixed), local taxes, charges for visits to shrines, &c., say ...		30
Total for Mecca and Medina ...		590

*General Conditions during the Pilgrimage Season.*

171. The prices of food-stuffs and water were reasonable, Haji Abdul Majid reports, except during the height of the season (Haj days and one or two weeks previous), when prices leaped up by about 50 per cent., and water, particularly at Muna, went up to about 5 to 10 qurush per tin of 4 gallons (where 1 qirsh equals about 3 cents).

172. Security to pilgrims was maintained by the Saudi Arab Government throughout the season, though petty thefts, owing to the great poverty prevailing in the country, were reported to have occurred.

173. The hotels established in Mecca, Medina and Jedda by the Saudi Government were again not patronised by Malay pilgrims. Haji Abdul Majid attributes this to the greater solicitude of Malay mutawwifs, as compared with the mutawwifs of other nationalities, for the comfort, accommodation and well-being of their charges.

*Assistance to Pilgrims.*

174. As usual, much of the assistance given to pilgrims was of a pecuniary nature. Six destitute persons were repatriated and two others were given small sums as maintenance. They all signed undertakings to refund the sums expended on them respectively. At the same time efforts were made to impress upon the pilgrims that the "assistance" promised to them in their pilgrim passes does not include pecuniary assistance, and the Malay Pilgrimage Officer would bespeak the co-operation of the Government of Kelantan in impressing this point upon would-be pilgrims before they undertake the journey.

*Pilgrims with Single Tickets.*

175. Of the 173 registered pilgrims this season, as many as twenty-two of them came on single tickets, or more than 12 per cent. Considering the fact that both extension of validity of the return portions of these tickets up to five years, as well as refunds on those not used within those five years are now available (thanks to the generosity of the Blue Funnel Line), Haji Abdul Majid is of the opinion that Government authority to purchase single tickets by intending pilgrims should be withheld, except to persons of Saudi Arab nationality who are returning to their own country.

*The Issue of Pilgrim Passes.*

176. A few cases of persons of Siamese or Dutch-Javanese nationalities were discovered who, according to their pilgrim passes, were described as "British subjects" or "British-protected persons." It is felt that it is unnecessary to do more than mention this in order to ensure that officers issuing pilgrim passes adopt somewhat stricter measures in determining the nationality of pilgrims for insertion in their pilgrim passes.

*Medical Aid to Malay Pilgrims.*

177. Commencing with the pilgrimage season under review, the method of computing the cost of the medical treatment of pilgrims from British Malaya has been changed. At the suggestion of the Government of Netherlands India, whose medical officer in the Hejaz is charged with the duty of looking after the health of British Malays as well as his own subjects, the basis upon which a charge for medical stores is made was changed to a flat-rate charge of 1 florin per pilgrim. Formerly, the charge was determined by the proportion of British Malay pilgrims to the total of Dutch-Javanese and Malay pilgrims. The new system appears to have been introduced without any limitation of time. The monthly allowance to the Javanese doctor will continue in addition.

*Mortality.*

178. During the season under review there were four deaths, reported by the accompanying relatives of the deceased, up to the time the Malay pilgrimage officer left Jedda on the 3rd May. This was less than 2½ per cent. of the number of arrivals this season. Although this percentage of death was higher than that of last year (1 per cent.), it could scarcely be considered as abnormal, as during the last ten years there have been seasons when the rate has been as high as 15 per cent.

*Effects of Deceased Pilgrims.*

179. The British Legation at Jedda is still in correspondence with the Saudi Arab Government over the effects of two deceased pilgrims. Other enquiries were again successfully liquidated.



*Staff.*

180. Haji Abdul Majid, the Malay pilgrimage officer, arrived at Jedda on the 21st November, 1933, and Haji Muhammad Jamil assisted him as clerk from the 21st November, 1933, to the 25th December, 1933, and then from the 2nd April, 1934, to the 3rd May, 1934. His work was satisfactory, as usual. Haji Abdul Majid left again for Malaya on the 3rd May, 1934.

*(13) West African Pilgrimage.*

181. According to the Saudi returns (see paragraph 34), 891 West Africans came on pilgrimage this year via Suakin and Jedda as against 509 in 1933. The Saudi Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs stated that, in addition, a further 1,259 West Africans of all nationalities reached Saudi Arabia through the smaller ports south of Jedda by dhow from Massawa. This is the first time that the Saudi authorities have ventured on an estimate of the figure for these clandestine arrivals, though this Legation has reason to believe that 1,259 is, if anything, an under-estimation. In any case, they are thought not to have exceeded a total of 1,600 souls. Certain signs have been detected which would appear to point to a diminution in dhow traffic via Massawa, but it is still much too early to establish this with certainty, as the recent Saudi-Yemen war must have considerably restricted, during the past year, the normal flow of overland pilgrims to Asiri ports. The Saudi authorities also are now betraying a somewhat livelier consciousness of a traffic which unloads on this country an unprofitable and burdensome type of pilgrim, and are reported to have turned back a number of dhows entering their southern ports from Massawa.

182. The suggestion that the facts relating to the question of dhow traffic via Massawa be ventilated in the International Health Office (see paragraph 193 of last year's report) was adopted, with the result that the Government of Eritrea have, it is understood, received instructions from the Italian Government in this respect. It is to be hoped that all West Africans on transiting the port of Massawa *en route* for the eastern littoral of the Red Sea will be dealt with, in future, in accordance with the provisions of the International Sanitary Convention of 1926. It may be possible to present a more considered statement regarding the present extent of the dhow traffic via Massawa after the 1935 pilgrimage season, when the factors mentioned above may be more accurately assessed.

183. The Nigerian Pilgrimage Scheme (see paragraph 192 of last year's report) was successfully initiated this year. Sixty-nine Nigerians took out the new form of pilgrim pass in Maiduguri and all reached Jedda before pilgrimage day. At the date of writing this report (30th June, 1934) all but four have left for their home, via Suakin, after collecting their return tickets and the sum for subsistence due to them in Jedda. Certain points of quite minor importance were the subject of correspondence with the authorities concerned at the close of the twelve months under review.

184. As foreshadowed in paragraph 195 of last year's report, an urgent problem confronts this Legation regarding the disposal of a large number of British West African destitutes, varying, according to different estimates, from 1,500-2,500 souls. The great majority of these have come on pilgrimage in dhows, via Massawa, in recent years and are now destitute in this country owing, (a) to the fact that the demand for West African labour has decreased; (b) to the fact that as a result of (a) there is a marked increase in mendicancy, which has led the Saudi Government to enforce measures to rid the Holy Places of mendicants of whatever nationality; and (c) that the African village outside the walls of Jedda was ravaged by fire on the 5th April last and several hundred British West Africans rendered homeless. The situation, which as far as the fire-victims were concerned soon became less urgent, remained serious at the end of the period under review and was fully reported to His Majesty's Government and other British authorities concerned. In addition, the new Italian Chargé d'Affaires in Jedda was placed in full possession of all the facts of the case. It was suggested to him that West Africans who had come here via Massawa should return the same way and that the Eritrean Government should afford facilities, as they did in 1931, for their return journey. He promised sympathetic consideration and subsequently stated that he had reported the circumstances to his Government in Rome.

185. Some ten or so West Africans were, as usual, assisted on their onward journey to the Sudan from the funds of the Nigerian Repatriation Fund held by this Legation.

186. The Amir of Muri, who made the pilgrimage to Mecca this year accompanied by his son, two wives and servants, arrived in Jedda on the 20th March. He ran short of funds on his return from Mecca and was advanced £350 by this Legation.

*(14) Somali Pilgrimage.*

187. According to the Saudi returns (see paragraph 34), fifty-two Somalis of all nationalities entered this country via the port of Jedda this year, as compared with seventy-five last year. As far as can be judged, not more than twenty Somalis from the British Somaliland Protectorate and a lesser number from Aden are included in the figure of fifty-two. It is thought that fewer Somalis than usual came on pilgrimage overland this year owing to the Saudi-Yemen war, which seriously restricted free access to the Holy Land through the southern ports.

188. Nine Somali ratings of the sloop H.M.S. *Penzance*, on a visit to Jedda during Haj week, made the pilgrimage this year.

189. The system governing the repatriation of Somali destitutes was, in consultation with the Government of Somaliland, readjusted this year. It had been decided early last year (see paragraph 199 of last year's report) to repatriate able-bodied Somali destitutes by dhow and the aged and sick by steamship, but, it was found later in the year that owing to a variety of circumstances few of the Somalis repatriated by dhow reached their homes. Accordingly, all Somali destitutes were repatriated by steamship this year via Aden, and it is hoped that this procedure will be continued in future years.

190. The only advance made this year to a Somali was to the tribal chief (Garad) of the Eyal Warsengeri, who ran short of funds on his return from Mecca.

191. Repatriation of British Somalis: position on the 30th June, 1934:—

- (a) Applications considered deserving of consideration: 40.
- (b) Applicants repatriated: 26
- (c) Applications still under reference: nil.

*(15) Sudanese Pilgrimage.*

192. According to the Saudi returns (see paragraph 34), 534 Sudanese pilgrims entered the port of Jedda from Suakin this year in ships of the Khedivial Mail Line, as compared with 420 last year.

193. Fears that pilgrims from villages in the Sudan would again erroneously render themselves liable to increased Saudi dues, as described in paragraph 203 of last year's report, proved groundless. Only two cases came to the attention of the Legation. It should be stated in this connexion that certain holders of Suakin pilgrim passes were simply described as being "Min Ahali Essudan"—a rather vague description of domicile. This description tended to create a suspicion in the minds of the Saudi authorities that the holders of such pilgrim passes were natives of towns of the Sudan and that this general description of domicile was an attempt on the part of the holders to evade the payment of the higher dues.

194. Forty-nine Sudanese pilgrims were advanced a total of £131 12s. 2d. in the return season to enable them (a) to settle their mutawwif's dues; (b) repay loans contracted whilst on pilgrimage; and (c) to subsist while awaiting a home-bound ship. The individual sums advanced this year were unusually high as several applicants for relief represented large families.

195. Owing to the fact that the Khedivial Mail Line has, as usual, to serve pilgrims of all nationalities, there was the usual shortage of ships at various periods in the return season. Various Sudanese delegations visited the Legation (see section 13, paragraph 2, of the report for 1929) to protest against the ship shortage. They were informed that they must take their turn with the pilgrims of other nationalities. Mr. A. S. Redfern, the Commissioner of Port Sudan, who was on a visit to Jedda, during one of these periods of shortage, was informed of the position.



196. Repatriation of Sudanese: position on the 30th June, 1934:—

- (a) Applications considered worthy of consideration: 22.
- (b) Applicants repatriated: 3.
- (c) Applications still under reference: 19.

(16) *Zanzibari and East African Pilgrimage.*

197. The Saudi returns (see paragraph 34) show that twenty-seven Zanzibari and East African pilgrims entered the port of Jedda this year on pilgrimage as against one last year (in this connexion, see paragraph 207 of last year's report). Several of these pilgrims were in possession of pilgrim passes.

198. The Indian chauffeur mentioned in paragraph 208 of last year's report has at last been released by the Saudi authorities following the repeated representations of this Legation. Nothing further has been heard from the attorney who abandoned his claim for blood money last year.

199. No Zanzibari or East African pilgrim applied for repatriation this year.

(17) *South African Pilgrimage.*

200. According to the Saudi returns (see paragraph 34) ninety-eight South African pilgrims came on Haj this year as against thirty-seven in 1933.

201. In the return season a number who wished to return home via India booked passages on an Italian steamer bound for Bombay. On boarding the ship on its arrival in Jedda they were told that the commander of the ship, in view of certain shipping technicalities, was unable to take them as passengers, whereupon they had perforce to return to the shore and await a later ship (see paragraph 129 above).

202. No South African pilgrim applied for repatriation this year.

(18) *Palestinian and Transjordan Pilgrimage.*

203. According to the particulars furnished by the Palestine Government 377 Palestinian and Transjordanian pilgrims were registered this year as compared with 252 in 1933. The Saudi returns in paragraph 34 closely tally with this figure, as they show that 229 Palestinian and Transjordanian pilgrims landed at the port of Jedda and 156 at the port of Yanbu this year: a total of 385 persons. All these pilgrims, as usual, travelled to Suez by rail, and from thence to Jedda and Yanbu on ships of the Khedivial Mail Line.

204. In the return season 125 official Palestinian pilgrims applied to this Legation for the refund to them of the sums deposited in Palestine. One hundred and twenty-four of them were advanced £4 sterling each and one of them £3.

205. It was suggested to the Palestine Government this year that if the number of registered Palestinian pilgrims should exceed 500 souls a clerk be seconded to Jedda from Palestine to assist the officer who ordinarily deals with this pilgrimage. As, however, the final figure fell short of 500 the clerk's services were not required.

206. At the date of writing this report (30th June, 1934), twenty Palestinians and two Transjordanians, who came on pilgrimage overland this year, have been repatriated to Palestine via Egypt, leaving three Palestinians on hand whose cases are still under consideration in Palestine. The Palestine Government were good enough this year to expedite the enquiries into each individual case as it was referred to them by this Legation, with the result that complications were not so acute this year. Yet, in the most favourable conditions the problem of the disposal of overland destitute Palestinians and Transjordanians is a thorny one, and it is hoped to make this question the subject of separate communications to the two Governments concerned in due course.

(19) *Pilgrimages of Adenese and Natives of the Aden Protectorate.*

207. According to the Saudi returns (see paragraph 34) 267 Adenese and natives of the Aden Protectorate (including Hadhramis) came on pilgrimage this year, and entered Saudi Arabia via the ports of Yanbu, Jedda and Lith. The Saudis have not this year differentiated between the Adenese, thirty-one of whom came on pilgrimage in 1933, and the Hadhramis, who numbered 273.

208. The Adenese and natives of the Aden Protectorate (reference paragraph 218 of last year's report), had adequate shipping facilities in the return season. The Besse steamers ran to schedule, even if the date of their impending arrival was usually shrouded in mystery.

209. Fewer Hadhramis than ever of the semi-settled class applied to this Legation for travel papers to return home after the return season (see paragraph 223 of last year's report). At the date of writing this report (30th June, 1934), fewer than 270 applications have been received. Economic conditions have again seriously affected them. Owing to the prevailing financial stringency few have been able to recover outstanding debts due to them, while a number who work as domestic servants have not even been paid their wages for the past year.

210. Repatriation of Adenese and natives of the Aden Protectorate: Position on the 30th June, 1934:—

- (a) Applications considered deserving of examination: 30.
- (b) Applicants repatriated: None.
- (c) Applicants assisted: 10.
- (d) Applications still under reference: 4.

(20) *Muscatis, Bahreini and Koweiti Pilgrimages.*

211. According to the Saudi returns (see paragraph 34), which do not this year differentiate between pilgrims hailing from the sheikhdoms, &c., of the Arabian shores of the Persian Gulf, seventy-nine Muscatis, Bahreinis and Koweitis entered the port of Jedda on pilgrimage this year, while in 1933 the Saudi returns showed that eleven Muscatis and 179 Bahreinis arrived in this country on pilgrimage through the port of Jedda. Among notable pilgrims from Muscat this year was the ex-Sultan, his Highness Timur-bin-Feisal.

212. There is no doubt at all that a much larger number came on pilgrimage overland via Nejd, but there are no Saudi statistics available of this, nor can this Legation venture to estimate a figure.

213. No Muscati, Bahreini or Koweiti pilgrim applied for repatriation this year.

(21) *The Sarawak Pilgrimage.*

214. Last year two pilgrims came from Sarawak; this year, sad to relate, none.

[E 5976/715/25]

No. 17.

*Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.—(Received September 24.)*

(No. 270. Confidential.)

Sir,

*Jedda, September 3, 1934.*

1. I HAVE the honour to submit herewith the Jedda report for August 1934.

2. Copies have been distributed as in the list appended to the report for January.

I have, &c.

A. S. CALVERT.

Enclosure in No. 17.

JEDDA REPORT FOR AUGUST 1934.

I.—*Internal Affairs.*

184. August was a month of relaxation in Taif, of royal meetings, royal shooting parties, royal marryings and divorcings. As to the former sport, Ibn Saud is credited with a bag of 1,200 gazelle in the past two months; as to the latter, statisticians are not so precise. The King will not remove his Court to Riyadh until, it is believed, the middle of September at the earliest.

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185. Amir Saud returned to Taif from Najran on the 10th August. He was met by his father at Rinya on the 8th, and by Amir Feisal and other princes at Thamuda on the 9th. He was given a very festive reception and later visited Mecca for two days, where he was again fêted. He left for Riyadh on the 25th, with a train of some nine other princes, issuing, on his departure, a message of thanks to the country for the cordiality of its welcome.

186. Amir Feisal arrived in Jedda from Jizan on the 5th. He was clad in "ihram" and was said to be exhausted after a rough journey overland. There was no reception and he left the same day for Mecca and Taif in haste to be in time to meet Amir Saud. He, too, was given a public welcome in Mecca and shared the honours at Taif with his elder brother.

187. Amir Feisal made a later, unofficial and equally rapid visit to Jedda, in circumstances which have attracted attention to a little-advertised incident which took place last July upon the arrival of a contingent of Saudi soldiers from the Yemen by sea. It appears that the customs officials attempted to search the soldiers' kit for tobacco and other contraband, whereupon a fracas took place, an official was removed to hospital injured, and some seventeen soldiers were imprisoned. The dispute was settled on the 22nd August by Amir Feisal, during this lightning visit, in favour of the Customs Administration, a decision which gave rise to some comment as Ibn Saud himself was believed to favour allowing his victorious soldiery the privilege of customs exemption on their return from the wars.

188. Sheikh Yusuf Yasin was with the King throughout the month, both in Taif and in camp, save for a visit to Jedda over the 4th and 5th August in connexion with the return of Amir Feisal. On both the above dates he had interviews with His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires.

189. Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman, the Minister of Finance, remained in Taif indisposed during the month. He is understood to be recovering. During his illness his brother Hamad Suleiman acted for him.

190. A certain activity of an administrative character was reported during August. As the result of complaints by the townspeople of Mecca against one or two only of the sheikhs of quarters, Ibn Saud rather drastically dismissed the lot. He also despatched a mission of enquiry to Lith to deal with complaints made by the inhabitants against their Governor. A more important Special Commission, consisting of five members, appointed some months ago to inspect the northern coastal area, from Rabigh to Dhiba, returned towards the end of the month after an absence of two-and-a-half months on their mission.

191. The agreement concerning the importation of motor-cars, tyres, tubes, accessories and spare parts between Mr. Philby's firm, Sharqieh (Limited) and the Saudi Government was published in the *Umm-al-Qura* of the 10th and 17th August. The agreement, which supersedes the previous one, is to run for nine years. The company is to import Ford cars for the Government, Government companies and private companies, but private individuals may still import for their own use any make of car they please. The monopoly in the import of tyres and tubes is again assured to the company. The agreement is a longer document than its predecessor, and is more precise and detailed in regard to questions of price and method of payment. It is generally more liberal in its terms, but it still appears to contain provisions which may present some difficulty. Mr. Philby was in Jedda from the 17th to the 30th August, when he returned to Taif.

192. Mr. K. S. Twitchell (see paragraph 151 of last month's report) has been at Taif all the month, but appears to have made little progress towards securing his concession. It is thought Mr. Twitchell has not produced the argument that will always convince the Saudi Government—hard cash.

193. The second Wapiti aeroplane (see paragraph 152 of last month's report) was flown up to Taif early in the month and landed there safely. No further aerial activity has been observed in Jedda since.

194. During the month several fairly lengthy lists of foreign subjects who have adopted Saudi nationality have been published in successive issues of the *Umm-al-Qura* (see paragraph 153 (b) of the report for July).

195. Further instalments of the Coastguards Regulations, referred to at paragraph 153 (c) of the report for last month, have appeared. This is now a formidable document of eighty odd articles and an appendix.

196. The *Umm-al-Qura* of the 24th contained an official announcement that the Government were prepared to grant a concession for the transport of mail

by motor-car between Mecca, Riyadh and Hasa, and between Mecca, Qasim, Hail and Jauif. They were further prepared to grant a concession for the transport of pilgrims to Mecca from the Persian Gulf, and to Mecca or Medina from "neighbouring frontiers." Tenders are invited, and should be presented within fifteen days, on the basis of a bi-monthly service to Riyadh and Hasa, and a monthly service to Jauif.

197. In July it was announced that the postage stamps then current would be withdrawn, and a new set issued. There was some delay in carrying this out, but most denominations of the new issue were on sale at the end of July. The inscription "Royaume de l'Arabie Soudite" remains unchanged (see prefatory note to the report for January).

198. Sheikh Muhammad Tawil, the Director of Customs in Hasa, who had been on a visit to the Hejaz, left for Riyadh early in the month.

## II.—Frontier Questions and Foreign Relations in Arabia.

199. The late theatre of war is quickly returning to the humdrum ways of peace. The captains and kings have departed, further sundry contingents of troops and quantities of supplies have arrived by sea from the south, and the Mecca *Saut-al-Hejaz* proclaimed on the 6th that the tribes along the Saudi-Yemen frontier had resumed their nomadic lives and the peaceful exchanges of commerce. The same newspaper quoted reports from a source outside this country of anti-Italian feeling in the Yemen, and on the 27th reproduced an official communiqué, issued from Sana, protesting, perhaps a thought too indignantly, against the wicked lies so maliciously invented. Relations with "Their beloved ally" were the very pattern of their kind.

200. The expression of regret at the unintentional transgression by a desert patrol of the Saudi-Transjordan frontier near Haditha, recorded in paragraph 166 of the report for last month, evoked a somewhat acid acknowledgment by the Saudi Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Sheikh Yusuf Yasin later took up with His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires several minor matters the Saudi Government desired brought to the notice of the Transjordan authorities, as, for example, the alleged infraction of the frontier by shooting-parties from Transjordan, and the grazing of camels owned by the Transjordan authorities on the Saudi side of the boundary.

201. There has been a breeze in the Iraqi-Saudi relations. The Iraq Government on the 4th August complained to the Saudi Government, through their Chargé d'Affaires here, of the Saudi Chargé d'Affaires in Bagdad, Ibrahim-bin-Muammar, on the grounds of subversive activities at Kerbela and Najaf, propaganda for Ibn Saud as King of all Arabia, and the publishing of articles in the Iraqi press containing disparaging remarks about Amir Abdullah. The note, in which this complaint was formulated, demanded the recall of the Saudi Chargé. Apparently the heavy-handed and over-emphatic manner in which this note was followed up by the Iraqi Chargé stung Ibn Saud into a heated reply. Cooler counsels led the King to seek the advice of His Majesty's Government, Sheikh Yusuf Yasin interviewing Mr. Calvert on the 5th, when he recounted a number of Saudi grievances against Iraq, and stated his Government would be obliged to ask for the recall of the Iraqi representative if the Iraqi Government persisted in their demand for the recall of Ibrahim-bin-Muammar. It was later understood from Bagdad that the excess and maladroitness of the Iraqi Chargé here were recognised by his own Government, and a mollifying communication was to be addressed to the Saudi Government. Nothing further has since been heard. The breeze appears to have dropped.

## III.—Relations with Powers outside Arabia.

202. The Saudi Government are unable to be represented at the forthcoming Locust Conference to be held in London, and so informed the Legation, through whom the invitation had been extended, towards the end of the month.

203. From brief references in the Egyptian press it is gathered that a note has been received from the Saudi Government dealing with a number of matters of mutual concern. These are said to include the question of the Holy Carpet, the problem of religious endowments, and the vexed question of nationality.



204. The Egyptian consul, Hafez Bey Amer, at present on leave, has been transferred to Bagdad as second secretary in the Egyptian Legation there. He is to be succeeded here by Abdul Hamid Munir Effendi, transferred from Madrid.

#### IV.—Miscellaneous.

205. H.M.S. *Hastings* (Captain the Hon. C. P. Hermon-Hodge, D.S.C., R.N.) visited Jedda from the 2nd to the 6th August. This was the sloop's first visit here since being recommissioned. A much-reduced British colony joined men from the ship in a practice game of cricket in an almost noon-day sun on the 5th.

206. Mr. W. E. Blackhall, of the Sudan Government Cables, arrived on the 10th with two assistants from Port Sudan to examine the Jedda end of the cable. After a brief examination he is understood to have formed the opinion that the cable had been fouled by the anchor of the Saudi ship *Nasr*. He left on the 12th, but is expected to return later on.

207. M. van de Poll, the Dutch Moslem, passed through Jedda on the 16th from Medina to Mecca and Taif. He drove himself in an open car, clad in "ihram" and bareheaded, through the heat of the day.

208. August passes unmourned. The weather closed in even more stiflingly and clammy than in August of last year (see paragraph 190 of the report for that month).

209. The British Museum, to whom Mr. Philby for some time past has been sending specimens of the wild life of Arabia, announce the classification of an entirely new species of Red-legged Partridge (*Alectoris*), with a black throat and a light grey head. The identification of a further dozen or so sub-species of various kinds is also claimed.

210. The position as regards the manumission of slaves during the month of August was as follows:—

On hand at the beginning of the month : Nil.  
Took refuge in August : Two males.  
Manumitted in August and repatriated : Nil.  
Locally manumitted : Nil.  
On hand at the end of the month : Two males.

211. The Legation is dealing with an awkward case of a negro man who took refuge as a slave requesting repatriation to the Sudan, whom the authorities claim to be the son of a local Arab. The claim to paternity is unconvincing and further investigation is necessary.

[E 5977/148/25]

No. 18.

Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.—(Received September 24.)

(No. 272 E.)  
Sir,

Jedda, September 4, 1934.

THE situation with regard to the development of motor transport services in this country has been somewhat obscure of recent months. That the Saudi Government have been actively considering not merely the establishment, in collaboration with the authorities in Iraq, of an overland motor service for pilgrims from Iraq to Medina, but a more extensive service, based on Mecca and Riyadh, seemed evident.

2. In May last, Muhammad Sadiq, the King's chauffeur (No. 83 of Jedda Personalities Report), a man of considerable business ability and a capitalist to boot, informed the Indian vice-consul that he had received from the hands of Ibn Saud, whose high favour he enjoys, a concession for a motor transport service between Mecca, Riyadh and Hasa, Riyadh and Iraq, and Medina and Iraq for a period of ten years. In August he was of the opinion that his concession still held good.

3. Meanwhile, in July, the Iraq Chargé d'Affaires here was stating confidently to intimates that the question of the overland motor route for pilgrims between Iraq and Medina had been settled by the two Governments concerned.

4. I now have the honour to transmit to you herewith a translation of an announcement which appeared in the *Umm-al-Qura* of the 24th August, relative to the transport of mails by car in this country, and also to the transport of pilgrims from the Persian Gulf "and neighbouring frontiers" to the Holy Cities. This disposes of Sadiq's concession unless it was not exclusive and monopolistic, but the short period of notice allowed to tenderers for the submission of their applications should enable the King's chauffeur to seize this opportunity. The communiqué would also appear to mark a further stage in the development of the overland motor route for pilgrims between Medina and Iraq.

5. I am sending copies of this despatch and enclosure to the Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Department of Overseas Trade, His Excellency the Viceroy of India, Foreign and Political Department, and His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Bagdad.

I have, &c.

A. S. CALVERT.

Enclosure in No. 18.

Extract from the *Mecca Umm-al-Qura*, No. 506 of August 24, 1934.

(Translation.)

Official Communiqué No. 18.

THE Government announce that they have a project in hand for the transportation of mail by cars from Mecca to Riyadh and thence to Hasa and also from Mecca to Qasim, Hail and Jauif. They are also prepared to grant a concession for the transportation of pilgrims from the Persian Gulf to Mecca and also from the neighbouring frontiers to Mecca or Medina. Whoever is capable of undertaking this task should approach the Government with his terms, on the understanding that mail to Riyadh and Hasa should be twice a month; and to Jauif once a month. Fifteen days' notice from this date is allowed to those who wish to undertake this enterprise.

[E 5874/2429/25]

No. 19.

Record of First Meeting with Fuad Bey Hamza (Deputy Saudi Arabian Minister for Foreign Affairs), held at the Foreign Office on September 19, 1934.

FUAD BEY HAMZA called on Mr. Rendel this morning accompanied by the Saudi Arabian Minister in London, Sheikh Hafiz Wahba. Sir A. Ryan was also present, except at the beginning of the conversation.

2. Mr. Rendel drew Fuad Bey out on the subjects he wished to discuss, and elicited the fact that he regarded the question of the south-eastern frontier of Saudi Arabia as being of special importance.

3. Fuad Bey dealt first, however, with the question of the relations between Saudi Arabia and Iraq. He wished to know how His Majesty's Government would view a tightening up of those relations in the common interest of two Arab countries, both of which were on specially friendly terms with His Majesty's Government. His Government had not made any definite approach to the Iraqi Government, but they had the possibility in view, always provided that His Majesty's Government saw no objection. They did not wish to do anything contrary to His Majesty's Government's policy.

4. Mr. Rendel said that he would like to have a clearer view of what Fuad Bey had in mind. Speaking generally, and subject to the approval of the Secretary of State, he said that His Majesty's Government would welcome anything tending to promote concord and prosperity between the Arab States, and would therefore view with sympathy any rapprochement between Saudi Arabia and Iraq which had for its object the promotion of peace in Arabia. It would be necessary to consider carefully the nature of any proposed understanding, to



ensure that it was consonant with the existing obligations of the parties, notably those of Iraq under her Treaty of Alliance with us and as a member of the League of Nations. He did not think, however, that such obligations would be a barrier to a closer understanding between Saudi Arabia and Iraq, and considered that any points which might arise could be covered by suitable drafting.<sup>(1)</sup>

5. *Sir A. Ryan* concurred, adding, however, that he thought King Abdul Aziz had rather more in view and sought some sort of a British guarantee of the proposed Saudi-Iraq understanding.

6. *Fuad Bey* said that this was a misconception. The King did not seek a guarantee, but wished merely to ascertain the attitude of His Majesty's Government. He went on to ask what kind of understanding would be suitable, whether, for instance, His Majesty's Government would be a party to it or whether their position would be merely that of a third Power, which would be kept informed at intervals of what was passing and would take a sympathetic interest.

7. *Mr. Rendel* explained, on the one hand, the objections of His Majesty's Government to assuming any new obligations, and, on the other, the undesirability of the indefinite multiplication of instruments having no real meaning. He repeated, again reminding *Fuad Bey* that he was speaking subject to the approval of the Secretary of State, that His Majesty's Government would view with sympathy a rapprochement between Saudi Arabia and Iraq, subject to what he had said about the need for harmonising it with existing obligations, but that, while they would be glad to receive such information as the parties directly concerned might give them, they would prefer not to be themselves parties to the understanding arrived at.

8. *Sir A. Ryan* observed that it was all the more important to have a clear view, as express reference had been made in all the earlier discussions to two other Powers, non-Arab, with whom His Majesty's Government were also on terms of friendship, and who were neighbours of Iraq though not of Saudi Arabia.

9. *Fuad Bey* said that he had nothing to conceal. The two Powers just mentioned were Turkey and Persia. His Government were at present on quite friendly terms with both, and there was no aggressive motive behind their wish for closer relations with Iraq. Nevertheless, the recent rapprochement between Turkey and Persia had inspired anxiety in all Arab countries. It was all the greater as a secular racial animosity existed between Arabs and both Turks and Persians. However correct relations might now be, his Government feared the ulterior designs of Turkey and Persia, about which they had a good deal of information.

10. Turkey favoured the maintenance of the French position in Syria, subject to her wish for a readjustment in her favour in the Alexandretta region. Mustafa Kemal Pasha had stated to a reliable informant that Turkey preferred to have two separate Powers on her southern border.<sup>(2)</sup> There was no secret about Persian aspirations in the Persian Gulf, witness the claims she was asserting to Bahrein, &c. Persia was growing more powerful, *e.g.*, she now had six warships in the Gulf, where previously there had been none but British ships. Speaking as an Arab, *Fuad Bey* would like to see Bahrein develop into an independent Arab unit; in the meanwhile, he certainly did not wish to see Persia establish a claim, as against His Majesty's Government.

11. *Mr. Rendel* said he did not think Persian claims to Bahrein need worry *Fuad Bey*, but that he understood the general anxiety of which he had spoken. At the same time such information as His Majesty's Government possessed did not suggest that there was much danger in the rapprochement between Turkey and Persia, or that either Power had aggressive designs. Turkey had pursued a remarkably peaceful and non-aggressive policy for the last ten years.

12. *Fuad Bey* was impressed by the quick changes that came over the relations of States. In Europe he found a very different grouping from that of

<sup>(1)</sup> This question has already been fully considered by the Foreign Office legal advisers in connexion with an earlier proposal for a Perso-Iraqi non-aggression pact.

<sup>(2)</sup> I took this to imply that he thought that Turkey would oppose any Arab combination in northern Arabia, *e.g.*, between Syria and Iraq.—(Initialled) G. W. R.

two years ago. He cited as one example the present closeness of the relations between France, Russia and Turkey. It had looked some months ago as though there were even more material for war than in 1914. Happily this danger had been averted, but there might again be quick changes; and similarly in the East, whatever the present position, Turkey and Persia might become hostile to the Arabs. Any blow aimed by them at Iraq would, as the King had told *Sir A. Ryan*, menace Saudi Arabia indirectly.

13. This digression was not further pursued. *Fuad Bey* said he understood what *Mr. Rendel* had said regarding His Majesty's Government's attitude in regard to the proposed rapprochement between Saudi and Iraq. He went on to ask what view would be taken of similar rapprochements with other Arab States.

14. *Mr. Rendel* emphasised the importance which His Majesty's Government attach to a settlement between Saudi Arabia and Koweit. As regards the smaller States on the Persian Gulf, however, he said that it would be of great importance to know clearly what sort of arrangements *Fuad Bey* had in mind. Was not the situation already sufficiently provided for under article 6 of the Treaty of Jeddah. His Majesty's Government gave a very free hand to the rulers of those States in matters of local concern, but they were responsible for their foreign affairs. Saudi Arabia was a great and powerful State compared with these minor sheikhdoms. Might not closer relations with Ibn Saud end by making these States into something like satellites of the greater Power? His Majesty's Government would certainly not be able to acquiesce in any such development.

15. It was agreed to resume this discussion later. Asked what other subjects he wished to raise, *Fuad Bey* again referred to the question of the south-eastern frontier and mentioned in a general way what had passed between him and *Sir A. Ryan* about the position in regard to the Treaty of Jeddah.

It was agreed to discuss the frontier question to-morrow morning, and *Fuad Bey* undertook to produce, after this had been done, a further list of subjects.

16. *Sheikh Hafiz Wahba* made no contribution to the discussion.

A. R.

*Foreign Office, September 19, 1934.*

[E 5908/2429/25]

No. 20.

*Record of Second Meeting with Fuad Bey Hamza, held at the Foreign Office on September 20, 1934.*

THE meeting was attended by—

*Mr. Rendel.*

*Fuad Bey Hamza* (Deputy Saudi Arabian Minister for Foreign Affairs).

*Sheikh Hafiz Wahba* (Saudi Arabian Minister in London).

*Sir Andrew Ryan* (His Majesty's Minister at Jeddah).

*Mr. Johnstone.*

*Mr. Rendel* recalled that, at *Fuad Bey's* request, it had been agreed on the previous day to begin the present discussion by examining the problem of the eastern and south-eastern frontiers of Saudi Arabia. As the Saudi Government were aware, His Majesty's Government were satisfied as to the continued legal validity of the position established by the Anglo-Turkish Conventions of 1913 and 1914. They saw nothing to be gained, however, by pursuing the discussion on purely legal lines if there were any other means of reaching a satisfactory settlement; they realised that King Ibn Saud felt strongly on the subject; and they considered that a friendly adjustment of the matter should be possible. They were anxious for a friendly settlement of all outstanding questions with King Ibn Saud, but, in the first place, they would like to know more about King Ibn Saud's own views on the frontier problem. His Majesty's Government had



certain important responsibilities east of the "blue line," which King Ibn Saud had recognised. It was desirable to establish some agreed boundary in the region in question; but, before going any further, it was necessary to have some idea of King Ibn Saud's desiderata.

*Fuad Bey* expressed his satisfaction at hearing that His Majesty's Government did not intend to take their stand rigidly on what they considered their legal rights. King Ibn Saud, he said, was not aiming at expansion, nor did he desire to hold anything which he had not held before. The appeal of His Majesty's Government to the two Anglo-Turkish Conventions had, however, come as a great shock to him. Those conventions had not been referred to on past occasions, either at the time of the conclusion of the treaty of 1915, under which the question of King Ibn Saud's eastern frontiers was left open to further discussion, or at the time of the negotiation of the Treaty of Jeddah in 1927, when King Ibn Saud had enquired about the relations of His Majesty's Government with the Arab chiefs of the Persian Gulf, and had been furnished with copies of a number of agreements, but not of these. Meanwhile, *Fuad Bey* was awaiting details regarding the boundary line which King Ibn Saud wished to propose, and he expected to receive these by Monday, the 24th September. Speaking generally, he considered that King Ibn Saud would claim that those tribes who had long been considered his subjects should continue under his rule, and that their territories should be included in his dominions; he cited particularly the Murra and Manasir tribes. To the south, he suggested that the Qara Mountains beyond the Ruba-al-Khali might be a suitable boundary.

*Mr. Rendel* pointed out to him that the latter claim was a very far-reaching one, as the Qara Mountains were close to the south coast of Arabia. It was clear from *Mr. Bertram Thomas's* journeys and maps that there was an extensive area between these mountains and the Ruba-al-Khali, which appeared always to have been part of the territory of Muscat.

*Fuad Bey* then mentioned another line of hills further north, and implied that Ibn Saud did not wish to claim any territory to the south beyond the Ruba-al-Khali; but the point was not pursued.

*Mr. Rendel* repeated that, if His Majesty's Government should find it possible to reach a satisfactory friendly agreement, they would not insist on the legal aspect of the matter; but, in saying this, what they had in mind was something more than an agreement on this one question; they desired, in fact, a general agreement which should cover a number of questions outstanding between the two Governments, for instance, the Koweit blockade. In regard to some of these questions, His Majesty's Government would have certain desiderata; King Ibn Saud would no doubt have his own desiderata in other directions. If the frontier question could be satisfactorily settled as part of such a general agreement, the legal position of His Majesty's Government could be left on one side. His Majesty's Government must, however, reserve their right to return to their legal claims if for any reason a general settlement were not found possible. The legal position, even if left in abeyance, remained unchanged, and His Majesty's Government were still prepared, if necessary, to uphold the legal validity of the "blue line."

*Sir A. Ryan* concurred in this view. He added that, in pressing for a general settlement, His Majesty's Government were following the lead given by King Ibn Saud himself, when he had suggested conversations with a view to clearing up his whole position *vis-à-vis* of His Majesty's Government.

*Mr. Rendel* suggested that the further examination of the frontier problem might be allowed to wait until *Fuad Bey* received the instructions which he was shortly expecting. Meanwhile, he felt bound to make it clear that there was, in fact, a good reason why copies of the Anglo-Turkish Conventions of 1913 and 1914 had not been given to Ibn Saud after the Treaty of Jeddah. King Ibn Saud had at that time merely asked for copies of the agreements between His Majesty's Government and other Arab rulers. There had, therefore, been no question of supplying him with copies of agreements between His Majesty's Government and the Ottoman Government. In any case, the "blue line" was generally known and appeared on several published maps.

*Fuad Bey* expressed himself as hopeful of reaching a settlement of outstanding questions. He added, however, that, although King Ibn Saud might be willing to settle any present differences between himself and His Majesty's Government, he was anxious that there should not be any suspicion of what *Fuad Bey* termed "marchandage." As regards the frontier problem, His Majesty's Government's reservation of their legal rights might perhaps raise difficulties. Would it not be better to leave the legal aspect out altogether, confine the discussion to the actual facts of the present position, and treat each question separately on its individual merits, as His Majesty's Government had always insisted on doing in the past?

*Mr. Rendel* pointed out that in any general settlement, while problems were naturally considered on their merits, they also had to be considered as interconnected parts of a whole. So long as there was hope of a satisfactory general settlement it would be possible to leave the question of strict legal rights in abeyance, but it must always be understood that, if finally a general settlement proved unattainable, a return could be made to the separate examination of each particular case on its own merits. There was no question of what *Fuad Bey* had called "marchandage." The position was simply that the merits of any particular question would have to be considered in the light of the overriding merits of the settlement as a whole. It was a case of give and take and of taking the long rather than the short view.

*Sir Andrew Ryan* emphasised his earlier remark that His Majesty's Government were following King Ibn Saud's lead. It was in accordance with King Ibn Saud's own wishes that His Majesty's Government were in this case departing from their more usual practice of considering each question in isolation, and were agreeing to consider the various outstanding questions together. They realised that if an attempt were made to deal with the frontier difficulty by itself, the King's strong feelings would make a settlement on a strictly legal basis difficult and contentious; he gave as an instance the known reluctance of King Ibn Saud to admit that he could be held to be bound by transactions with the former Turkish Government.

*Mr. Rendel* again urged that it would be much easier to merge the frontier question in a general settlement. He informed *Fuad Bey* that it was contemplated that *Sir Andrew Ryan* should embark on general negotiations on his return to Jeddah, provided that it was possible to agree in principle to such negotiations now.

*Fuad Bey* finally expressed willingness in principle to deal with the various outstanding problems on general lines, but explained that King Ibn Saud, who had made so many sacrifices in the past for the sake of good relations with His Majesty's Government, could not be expected to make many further concessions now.

*Sir Andrew Ryan* demurred to *Fuad Bey's* suggestion that Ibn Saud had done nothing but make sacrifices to His Majesty's Government. He had indeed accommodated his policy to theirs, but he had derived much benefit from their support.

*Mr. Rendel* pointed out that the only sacrifices which both sides would be required to make in the projected general settlement would be such as might, on a long view, be expected to bring them compensating advantages in the end. It was not a case of altruism on either side. But in any general settlement between two Governments both sides usually had to give way over certain points. Meanwhile, he would be grateful if *Fuad Bey* could, on his part, outline the principal questions which King Ibn Saud might like to see included in a general settlement. So far as His Majesty's Government were concerned, he had already mentioned their chief preoccupation, namely, the question of the Koweit blockade. It was their earnest wish to see relations between Saudi Arabia and Koweit put on a really satisfactory basis, as had been done successively in the case of Saudi relations with Iraq and later with Transjordan.

*Fuad Bey* stated that King Ibn Saud fully realised the desire of His Majesty's Government for a settlement of the blockade question, which had indeed formed the subject of intermittent discussion between the two Governments for



the past four years. His Majesty's Government should, however, understand that King Ibn Saud's measures against Koweit were taken not from hostility but purely in order to safeguard his interests. King Ibn Saud had made his position clear and it was for His Majesty's Government to propose the lines of a settlement.

*Fuad Bey* then raised the question of the future of the Treaty of Jedda, which was now subject to denunciation on short notice by either side—a position which Ibn Saud regarded as unsatisfactory. After some discussion it was agreed that there were three possible alternatives, namely, to denounce the treaty without replacing it by any new instrument, to give it a greater degree of permanence by a supplementary agreement, or to negotiate an entirely new treaty which could if necessary replace it. The first of these alternatives was mutually agreed to be undesirable. The choice between the other two would depend on the nature of the general settlement. It was possible that, if the new general settlement of outstanding questions between the two Governments grew in scope as the negotiations proceeded, it might eventually be found desirable to conclude an entirely new Anglo-Saudi treaty. In the meanwhile, no decision need be taken on this point.

*Sir Andrew Ryan* alluded to previous conversations with *Fuad Hamza*, in which *Fuad Hamza* had mentioned the following points in regard to which the Treaty of Jedda seemed to need amendment: Slavery, the Akaba-Maan question (though *Fuad Hamza* had then said that the King did not wish to go back on the present arrangements) and the present form of article 6 of the Treaty of Jedda regarding the relations between Ibn Saud and the Arab rulers of the Persian Gulf.

*Fuad Bey* said that he wished to add a fourth point, namely, that of the prevailing language of the treaty text. As His Majesty's Government were aware, it had been stipulated in the Treaty of Jedda that the English text should prevail. In the recent Anglo-Yemeni Treaty, on the other hand, the Arabic text had been allowed to prevail.

*Mr. Rendel* drew attention to the fact that the first two points which had been mentioned, *i.e.*, the question of slavery and that of the Akaba-Maan frontier, were not, in fact, dealt with in the text of the Treaty of Jedda, but in exchanges of notes signed at the time of the conclusion of the treaty, but, in fact, quite independent of it. These two questions, whatever might be decided about them, need not therefore affect the future of the treaty. As regards the question of the relations between Ibn Saud and the Arab rulers of the Gulf, which was dealt with in a general way in article 6 of the Treaty of Jedda, he considered that any more elaborate arrangements, which it might be necessary or desirable to make to govern future relations between Ibn Saud and the rulers of South-Eastern Arabia, would normally fall to be discussed in connexion with any arrangements that might be made regarding the south-eastern frontiers of Saudi Arabia. He thought he ought perhaps to mention at this point that the Sultan of Muscat was more completely independent than the Trucial sheikhs, and that it might therefore be necessary for him to be brought in as a separate party to any eventual settlement. He repeated, however, that the whole of this question seemed to him to fall to be dealt with together with that of the frontier.

As regards the question of the prevailing language of any new agreement, he said that this seemed to him to be a point of form which should not be allowed to interfere with the political issues involved. In point of fact, the departure from precedent which had been agreed to in the case of the recent treaty with the Yemen was due to the unique circumstance that the Yemen was so out of touch with civilisation elsewhere that no one could be found in that country with any adequate knowledge of any European language. Unique conditions required unique treatment. Saudi Arabia was in a very different position. The point, however, involved rather complicated questions of precedent, &c., and had better be dealt with quite independently of the political issues.

*Mr. Rendel* then proceeded to deal with the question of slavery. He explained that this question was one of great importance, on which public sentiment in this country was extremely strong. England had played a very remarkable part in the abolition of the institution of slavery, and public opinion here would

never tolerate any step which might be regarded as a step in the wrong direction. If any new arrangements were to be made on this point, therefore, it must be quite clear that their effect would be to hasten and not to retard the inevitable and ultimate abolition of slavery as an institution. He felt sure that *Fuad Bey*, and indeed King Ibn Saud himself, were sufficiently enlightened to realise that slavery as an institution was fundamentally wrong, and was doomed to extinction in any country that hoped to make true progress and to play a worthy part among the nations of the world. He could say categorically, therefore, that His Majesty's Government would not be able to agree to any new arrangement which did not fit in with these principles. The question was of such importance that he could not in any case do more than hear and take note of any proposals which *Fuad Bey* might wish to make. If, however, King Ibn Saud should wish to propose some arrangement the effect of which would be not to retard but to accelerate the abolition or at any rate the reduction of slavery, he felt sure it would be examined with all possible consideration for the King's position in the matter.

*Fuad Bey* stated that in his view slavery would sooner or later cease when slaves ceased to be imported. King Ibn Saud could, however, proceed no further than the social and economic state of his kingdom would allow. Further, he had to make allowances for the fact that Islamic law permitted slavery. Steps might, nevertheless, be taken to limit the number of slaves in such a way that an annual decline in their number would eventually lead to the total extinction of slavery. He alluded once again to the recent Anglo-Yemeni treaty settlement, under which the Imam had undertaken not to allow the importation of slaves into his territory. It might be possible for King Ibn Saud to give some undertaking of that nature and simultaneously to take steps to alleviate the lot of those slaves who were already in Saudi Arabia.

*Mr. Rendel* said that it would, of course, make a great difference if King Ibn Saud could take any such steps within his own dominions.

*Fuad Bey* explained that there were great difficulties attending such action. Apart from King Ibn Saud's difficulties with his own public opinion, it was essential that, if he were to maintain his prestige, his action should not be capable of being represented as dictated by external pressure. He suggested that it should be left to King Ibn Saud to take appropriate action as a matter of internal policy.

*Mr. Rendel* replied that His Majesty's Government fully realised these difficulties, but that they did not seem to him insuperable. A prohibition of the importation of slaves would, of course, be a great step forward. But this would not really affect the question of the institution of slavery, since the existing slave population was large enough, he understood, to maintain the supply of slaves for an indefinite period. If, therefore, Ibn Saud could take some steps with a view to the gradual reduction of the number of born slaves, it would be more useful still. Some concession, such as that which *Fuad Bey* had himself suggested, providing for the emancipation of slaves who were maltreated or discontented with their lot, would be an enormous step forward. Such a measure would, of course, for the reasons which had just been discussed, have to be taken by Ibn Saud on his own initiative. But if it were actually taken, it might make it much easier for His Majesty's Government to make some concession in return. He suggested, as a personal and unofficial suggestion of his own, that by far the best solution would be for Ibn Saud spontaneously to take some action in the sense proposed, in advance of any concession by His Majesty's Government. Any concession which His Majesty's Government might agree to make could then be made subsequently, in specific recognition of the fact that Ibn Saud had taken the measures in question. This might create an excellent impression here, and might justify some modification of the present arrangements. *Mr. Rendel* repeated, however, that he could give no undertaking at this stage as to what the attitude of His Majesty's Government would be.

*Fuad Bey* thought that something on these lines might be possible, but that Ibn Saud would certainly require some guarantee from His Majesty's Government in advance that, if he took the action proposed, His Majesty's Government would subsequently make the desired concession.



Sir Andrew Ryan observed that His Majesty's Government were being asked to abandon an existing right. It would be necessary to justify any such abandonment to opinion in this country, which, on this subject, was very strong, to a wider British opinion, including that of many Moslems, and to international opinion. It would not suffice for such justification to rely merely on an assurance of Ibn Saud's good intentions. It would be necessary to know what definite action he contemplated to prevent the slave trade and to mitigate the lot of slaves actually suffering from hardship. Although the lot of slaves generally in Saudi Arabia might be fortunate, there were, in fact, instances of oppressive slavery. He cited as an example the facility with which slave husbands and wives could be separated.

It was decided to pursue this matter at a later meeting. Before leaving, Fuad Bey Hamza mentioned four points which he would wish to pursue with His Majesty's Government during the following discussions. These were:—

- (1) The Hejaz Railway.
- (2) The cable line between Jedda and Port Sudan.
- (3) The Koweit Neutral Zone oil concession.
- (4) Bahrein transit dues.

*Eastern Department, Foreign Office,  
September 20, 1934.*

[E 5957/2429/25]

No. 21.

*Record of Third Meeting with Fuad Bey Hamza held at the Foreign Office on  
September 21, 1934.*

THE following were present:—

Mr. Rendel.  
Fuad Bey Hamza, Deputy Saudi-Arabian Minister for Foreign Affairs.  
Sheikh Hafiz Wahba, Saudi-Arabian Minister in London.  
Sir A. Ryan.  
Mr. Johnstone.

Mr. Rendel suggested that the meeting should consider in order the various points to which Fuad Bey had referred at the end of the previous day's meeting. The first of these was the question of Aqaba and Maan. Mr. Rendel was not altogether clear as to Fuad Bey's object in raising this question. The present position between the two Governments rested on the first exchange of notes signed at the time of the conclusion of the Treaty of Jedda, which provided for the maintenance of the *de facto* frontier. He understood that Fuad Bey had recently stated to Sir A. Ryan at Jedda that the Saudi Government were not seeking to disturb this arrangement.

Sir A. Ryan added that he understood that the Saudi Government maintained their previous attitude of reserve towards this question, but that they did not consider the present time propitious for reopening it.

Fuad Bey explained that for various reasons, both political and religious, his Government were unable to accept the separation of the Aqaba-Maan district from the Hejaz. They would always be ready to discuss this question on this basis, but if His Majesty's Government did not consider the present moment opportune for reopening it, the Saudi Government had on their side no wish to raise it. Failing a further discussion and a new settlement, the Saudi Government were prepared to preserve the existing arrangement.

Mr. Rendel said that there would, of course, have been advantages—if there were to be any general clearing up of outstanding questions—in reaching a permanent settlement on this particular point also. It would have been desirable to establish a clear and definitive frontier in this area. But there could be no

question of His Majesty's Government modifying their attitude on the main issue of the future of Aqaba and Maan, and if the Saudi Government were not prepared to consider any suggestion for a permanent and definitive settlement on the basis of the present *de facto* situation, there would certainly be no advantage in reopening the question.

On the other hand, there seemed to be some local uncertainty as to the precise definition of the frontier at various points on the frontier between Transjordan and Saudi Arabia. In view of what Fuad Hamza had said regarding the Aqaba-Maan sector of the frontier—i.e., the *de facto* frontier between Transjordan and the Hejaz—there would probably be no object in discussing that sector of the line. But these considerations need not apply in regard to the Transjordan-Nejd sector of the frontier, where there might well be certain advantages in clearing up any local uncertainties. Mr. Rendel could not make any official suggestions on this point pending consultation with the Transjordan authorities; but, speaking quite personally and unofficially, he thought it might be worth taking the opportunity of the proposed general settlement to try to dispose of any local uncertainties that might exist as to the precise definition of the frontier line.

Sir A. Ryan gave as instances of the type of question which had created difficulty in this direction, the former dispute with the Saudi Government regarding the position of Haditha, which had since been acknowledged to be in Saudi territory, and the present difference over Hazim, which the Transjordan authorities considered as indisputably in Transjordan.

Mr. Rendel put forward personally and unofficially a tentative suggestion that some of these points might be disposed of by some kind of local technical frontier commission. He explained, however, that this suggestion was naturally subject to the views of the Transjordan authorities, and that it might be found to be open to unexpected difficulties.

Fuad Bey received this suggestion with partial assent. He agreed that a clarification of the position in regard to the Transjordan-Nejd frontier—e.g., by the appointment of a frontier or delimitation commission—might well be dealt with in the proposed general negotiations. On the other hand, if the question of the future of Aqaba and Maan were to be left in abeyance, his Government would have difficulty in touching in any way whatsoever the subject of the frontier between Transjordan and the Hejaz.

Mr. Rendel agreed that King Ibn Saud was free to maintain the position which he had taken up in 1927 on this subject, and thought that His Majesty's Government would, in these circumstances, probably be content to continue on the present basis, and not to press for any more formal recognition of the existing frontier. It would, however, be necessary to consult the various departments of His Majesty's Government concerned and the local authorities before saying anything more definite. Meanwhile, two points appeared to have emerged from the present discussion: (1) King Ibn Saud was not yet prepared to crystallise the present *de facto* frontier between Transjordan and the Hejaz; (2) there might be certain advantages in including in the proposed negotiations for a general settlement some arrangement for the clarification of any points connected with the Transjordan-Nejd frontier, regarding which there was any local uncertainty.<sup>(1)</sup>

<sup>(1)</sup> Confidential Footnote.—The uncertainties regarding the Transjordan frontiers to which Mr. Rendel referred are, in fact, due to the inaccuracy of the maps on which those frontiers were originally plotted. As a result of this inaccuracy there are places where the frontiers are in doubt, to an extent of as much as 20 miles. His Majesty's Government appear to have good legal grounds for maintaining their own interpretation of the frontier, but the matter has never been cleared up with the Saudi Government. The suggestions made at this meeting were intended to leave the door open for a settlement of this question, which is becoming one of some importance, as part of any general settlement that might be reached. It had been recognised from the first that it was likely to prove impossible to obtain a more formal recognition of the *de facto* frontier between Transjordan and the Hejaz, and that any attempt to redefine this *de facto* frontier might be a very delicate matter. On the other hand, the alignment of the eastern part of the frontier (which is one of the main points in doubt) depends to a great extent on the true position of the southern terminal point of the frontier between Transjordan and Nejd, which it would be one of the objects of any Transjordan-Nejd Delimitation Commission to establish. The delimitation of the Transjordan-Nejd frontier might thus in effect suffice to enable His Majesty's Government also to establish the correctness of their interpretation of the Transjordan-Hejaz *de facto* line.



The next subject which came up for discussion was the Hejaz Railway.

*Fuad Bey* enquired the views of His Majesty's Government on the proposal which he had made to Sir A. Ryan at Jedda for the calling of a technical conference to discuss the reconditioning of the railway.

It was explained that at first sight His Majesty's Government had no objection to the Saudi proposal, but that it had, of course, been necessary to consult the French Government, and that it was still necessary to consult the Transjordan authorities. There seemed likely to be no difficulty so far as the French Government were concerned, and although, pending the receipt of the views of the Transjordan authorities, it was still impossible for His Majesty's Government to make a definite statement on this point, it did not seem likely that there would be any objection to the present limited proposals of the Saudi Government.

It should be clearly understood, however, that His Majesty's Government could not depart from the attitude they had always taken up on this subject, i.e., that such wider issues as that of the ownership of the railway could not be brought into the discussion. The proposed conference could, therefore, only be agreed to on the clear understanding that it should confine itself to technical and practical points.

*Fuad Bey* acquiesced, and explained that what was intended was a return to the situation as it existed before the abortive Haifa Conference of 1928. He suggested, however, that the Saudi Government might reserve their position in regard to the ownership of the railway in an official note.

No objection was seen in principle to this procedure, though it was pointed out to *Fuad Bey* that something would depend on the actual wording of the Saudi reservation.

*Fuad Bey* explained that the matter had hitherto only been dealt with unofficially. If His Majesty's Government were prepared to accept the Saudi suggestion, his Government contemplated addressing an official note on the whole subject to both the British and French Governments, and proposing therein a technical conference on the lines he had indicated.

It was agreed that the next step was for His Majesty's Government to reply to the outstanding Saudi enquiry, which could not, however, be done until the views of the Transjordan authorities had been obtained.

The next subject on *Fuad Bey's* list was the question of telegraphic and wireless communication between Saudi Arabia and the outer world, with particular reference to the provisions of the Jedda-Port Sudan Cable Agreement.

*Fuad Bey* recalled the fact that the Saudi Government were debarred by article 6 of this agreement from using their wireless stations in the Hejaz for the purpose of communication with other countries. When the agreement had been signed there were two separate Governments, in the Hejaz and in Nejd, and the agreement had been interpreted as applying to the Hejaz only. The situation had now greatly changed in every respect; and the Saudi Government were finding it exceedingly inconvenient to be obliged to send all telegraphic communications from the Hejaz by the Port Sudan cable. A French company, the Radio Orient, and various Italian interests had also approached the Saudi Government in the matter.

*Sir A. Ryan* recalled that the working agreement had been entered into by the Sudan and Hejaz Governments jointly as joint owners, and by the Eastern Telegraph Company as workers, of the cable. The agreement was terminable on two years' notice, to be given either by both joint owners or by the company.

*Fuad Bey* said that an exchange of notes had taken place between the Sudan and Saudi Governments arranging that if the Saudi Government should approach the Sudan Government with a view to the termination of the agreement, the Sudan Government would agree to join in giving the required notice.

*Sir A. Ryan* stated that the interpretation of the agreement had in the past given rise to various legal difficulties which had not, however, been pursued, as the amalgamation of the Eastern Telegraph Company with Marconis seemed to

have simplified the problem. On the Persian Gulf side, however, a somewhat similar problem had arisen over the question of communications between Hasa and Bahrein. Conversations had taken place between King Ibn Saud, Sheikh Yusuf Yasin and Sir H. Biscoe in 1932. No advance had been made, and the matter had lain dormant for some time, but had lately been revived, and His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Jedda had been instructed to revert to it with the Saudi Government.

*Fuad Bey Hamza* also raised the question of the charges on the cable. It was agreed, however, that the question of the interpretation of the Jedda-Port Sudan Cable Agreement and of Saudi wireless communications with other countries was a very technical one and one in which His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom were not very directly interested, and that it would be preferable, therefore, that this question should not be dealt with in the proposed general settlement. It was agreed that the best course would be for a meeting to be arranged before *Fuad Bey's* departure from London between himself and representatives of Cables and Wireless (Limited) (now incorporating *inter alia* both the Eastern Telegraph Company and Marconis) and, if possible, some representative of the Sudan Government, possibly Sir Stewart Symes, who was understood to be in England on leave.

The next subject discussed was the Koweit Neutral Zone Oil Concession.

*Fuad Bey* recapitulated the position of the Saudi Government *vis-à-vis* the Standard Oil Company of California in regard to the option which had been given them in connexion with this concession. After a short discussion, however, it was agreed to postpone further examination of this matter until the following week, when an India Office expert on this question would be available to join in the discussion.

16. Finally, the question of the Bahrein Transit Dues was raised. *Fuad Bey* explained that there were two difficulties confronting his Government in this matter: firstly, the question of the transit dues themselves; and, secondly, the question of direct shipments to the Hasa coast. As regards the first of these, the Saudi Government feared that the Bahrein Government were about to raise the dues, if they had not already done so. They considered, moreover, that any consignments addressed either to King Ibn Saud or to the Saudi Government should be exempted from dues.

17. *Sir Andrew Ryan* stated that for some time past the negotiations on this subject had been transferred to London, and that, although he had been kept informed, he had not been directly concerned in this matter, until during his recent audience with King Ibn Saud at Taif the King had raised with him the question of direct shipments. He pointed out that it was scarcely fair of the Saudi Government both to demand that the Bahrein Government should reduce the rates of the dues and at the same time endeavour to kill the Bahrein transit trade. Bahrein must live.

18. *Mr. Rendel* stated that Sheikh Hafiz Wahba had already represented fully at the Foreign Office the views of his Government on this subject. His Majesty's Government, for their part, had suggested that a Saudi delegation should be sent to Bahrein, to examine whether the issue between the Saudi and Bahrein Governments could not be narrowed down if not removed altogether. He suggested that this was, in fact, the most practical means of settling this question, that the Saudi Government could not prejudice their case by sending such a delegation, and that if the discussions should fail they would still be free to pursue the matter with His Majesty's Government direct. The question, particularly as regards the dues, was a complicated and technical one, where local data would be necessary, and which could be dealt with far more effectively on the spot than in London or in Jedda. He felt sure that such a local meeting would do much to clear the air, even if it did not lead to a final settlement, and he suggested that preliminary discussions of this nature might well take place at once. *Sir A. Ryan* would not be back in Jedda until December, so there was plenty of time to explore the ground locally meanwhile. If the proposed local discussions should lead to nothing, and the Saudi Government should have



reasonable grounds for considering the attitude of the Bahrein Government to be unreasonable, it would still be possible to bring the matter into the scope of the general discussions with Sir A. Ryan after his return to Jedda.

*Sir Andrew Ryan* stated that he had always considered Saudi Arabia and Bahrein to be jointly interested in this matter, subject to a proviso that with the passage of time this common interest might weaken or vanish. He had throughout been convinced, and was still convinced, that the best method of arriving at a solution would be that which His Majesty's Government had proposed, namely, a discussion at Bahrein on a purely practical basis, with the object of arriving at an agreement which should be concluded for a limited period of, say, five years. Such a discussion, conducted by such local experts as, say, Mahomed at Tawil on the Saudi side, and the Financial Adviser, with the assistance of the British Political Agent, on the Bahreini side, would, in his opinion, offer every prospect of a settlement. He had again urged this solution at Taif, but King Ibn Saud appeared to be obsessed by the feeling that His Majesty's Government were inclined to boycott the development of the Hasa ports.

*Mr. Rendel* explained that His Majesty's Government had no wish to boycott or blockade Hasa or to interfere with its development. But, in any case, if the Saudi Government could not obtain reasonable satisfaction at the proposed local conference, they would still be able to raise this question during the general discussions at Jedda. *Mr. Rendel* saw nothing to be lost and much to be gained from the proposed local discussions.

*Fuad Bey* explained that he could not depart from his instructions on this question. He undertook, however, to suggest once more to the King the possibility of local discussion at Bahrein and to put to His Majesty the arguments which had been used. He quite realised that Bahrein must find some means of economic existence, but such an existence should not be parasitic. If Bahrein wished to live by its transit dues, it must give reasonable facilities. This would not be the case if the transit dues were raised, and in any case King Ibn Saud felt strongly that goods consigned to himself and his Government should be exempted.

*Mr. Rendel* said that so far as he was aware it was not in accordance with general practice to exempt from transit dues stores destined for a foreign Government.

*Sir Andrew Ryan* stated that His Majesty's Government had always been ready to give liberal treatment to stores destined for the actual use of King Ibn Saud. The economy of Nejd, however, was of a peculiar kind, and there seemed no good reason why stores which were, for instance, imported for the use of tribes should be exempted from transit dues.

*Fuad Hamza* then reverted to the question of direct shipments to Hasa. He emphasised the importance which King Ibn Saud attached to this, and added that local interests in Saudi Arabia, Basra, and even Persia were now considering the possibility of forming some independent navigation company, in view of the pressure which had been brought to bear on the British India Company not to make any shipments to the Hasa direct.

*Sir A. Ryan* urged on the Saudi representatives the importance of dispelling from the King's mind the idea that His Majesty's Government were trying to force him into economic dependence on Bahrein, and *Mr. Rendel* repeated that His Majesty's Government had no wish to bring about a boycott or blockade of the Hasa coast.

In conclusion, *Mr. Rendel* mentioned that His Majesty's Government might wish, in the course of any general negotiations, to revive the question of the passage of aircraft over Saudi Arabia. The question, which had often been discussed before, was, in one sense, one of diminishing importance, since the actual extent of the Saudi coastline on the Persian Gulf was small and the radius and reliability of aircraft were steadily increasing. It was, of course, against the policy of His Majesty's Government to make the regular passage of aircraft over any particular country subject to financial payments. It was clear that, once such a principle were established, there would be no end to it,

and that freedom of air communications all over the world would be greatly interfered with. But there would be certain advantages if some agreement could be come to with a view to facilitating the passage of aircraft over King Ibn Saud's territory.

The question of dealing with the matter in connexion with the proposed general settlement had not yet been fully considered, but *Mr. Rendel* thought it well to make it clear at once that His Majesty's Government might eventually wish to raise it, lest, if it were left over and only mentioned later, they should be regarded as endeavouring at the last moment to include new subjects in the general settlement and thereby altering its scope.

*Sir Andrew Ryan* observed that His Majesty's Government might wish to add certain subjects to the list of those to be reviewed during *Fuad Bey's* visit to London. He mentioned in particular the question of the Government of India's dispensary in the Hejaz. It was agreed that *Sir A. Ryan* should pursue this question, and possibly certain other minor matters, with *Fuad Bey* and the Saudi Minister on the morning of the 24th September. It was agreed that the next general conversation should take place on the afternoon of the 24th September, after *Fuad Bey* had seen the Secretary of State.

*Eastern Department, Foreign Office,  
September 21, 1934.*

[E 5996/2429/25]

No. 22.

*Fourth Meeting with Fuad Bey Hamza, held at the Foreign Office on the  
September 24, 1934.*

*Note by Sir Andrew Ryan.*

FUAD BEY, accompanied by Sheikh Hafiz Wahba, came to see me this morning in accordance with the arrangement made at the third conversation, that we should discuss separately the question of the Government of India's dispensaries in the Hejaz and possibly other minor questions.

2. I explained to *Fuad Bey* that the question of the dispensaries, though important, was non-political and concerned the Indian authorities. *Mr. Rendel* had therefore asked me to go into the matter with himself and Sheikh Hafiz Wahba. I reminded *Fuad Bey* that when he and I last discussed the question in Jedda we had seemed to be approaching a solution, but the discussion had been interrupted by his illness. The matter had now taken a new and less favourable turn, as the Saudi Government had addressed a circular to *Mr. Calvert*, in which they had asked for separate statements of medical supplies imported for the use of members of the Legation and those imported for general dispensary use, in order that customs duty should be levied on the latter. I read to him the main portions of the telegraphic correspondence, and said that there appeared to be two misconceptions, viz., (a) the Saudi Government seemed to think that medical supplies not intended for the use of the Legation staff were sold to the public, whereas, in fact, the quantities of medicine supplied in return for payment were negligible; and (b) they seemed to think that *Fuad Bey* and I had dealt only with the status of the Indian medical officers, whereas we had, in fact, dealt with the whole question of the dispensaries.

3. I urged that the Saudi Government should not try to force the issue by assuming that stores, other than those for the use of the members of the Legation, were liable to duty. The Jedda dispensary had existed for some fifty years, and had always enjoyed immunity as part of the British mission. Moreover, the Turkish Government had exempted from duty supplies imported by foreign charitable institutions as such, not only those for diplomatic use. The branch dispensary at Mecca had been opened with Ibn Saud's approval in 1925. There was, I admitted, no written record of this, as the arrangement had been made between the King and the Indian vice-consul, but the best indication of the King's attitude at that time was that for the first year he had provided a house



free of rent for the dispensary at Mecca. I was prepared, I said, to pursue the question on the lines foreshadowed in my discussion with Fuad Bey at Jedda, but I could not admit, pending a settlement, that supplies for the dispensaries were liable to customs duty, and I deprecated the attempt of the Saudi Government to enforce their own view in this respect before the whole matter had been thrashed out. The case was a unique one, and while not claiming that the exemption could be claimed under general international usage, there were strong reasons for maintaining it.

4. Fuad Bey suggested that no reliance could be placed on earlier precedent, as the Treaty of Jedda had swept away all such precedents. I replied that the Treaty of Jedda had not done this, but had said that our relations were to be based on principles of international law. International law took great account of established custom. I was quite prepared to seek a solution of the whole question, but I suggested that customs immunity should be granted for the supplies for next pilgrimage season, in order that the present situation should be preserved intact, until we could work out the solution.

5. Fuad Bey said that he had had nothing on the subject from his Government, and was not in a position to discuss it. I said that I was making a definite proposal, *i.e.*, that the stores for next pilgrimage season should be exempted from duty and the general discussion pursued at leisure. This could, if necessary, be pursued with Mr. Calvert, but I should prefer to leave it until Fuad Bey and I could deal with the matter on our return to Jedda. Fuad Bey noted my proposal.

6. I used various arguments, which need not be recorded in detail, to impress on Fuad Bey the importance of this question, urging *inter alia* that the Saudi Government should take account of the great services rendered by the dispensaries. They supplied wants which the Saudi Government were not as yet in a position to satisfy, and the Saudi Government should not make their position impossible by attempting to exercise excessive control or by adding customs duty to the expenditure entailed, the amount of which was already worrying the Government of India.

7. I told Fuad Bey that this was the most important of the small number of questions which I had suggested adding to the list of those already discussed with Mr. Rendel and myself. I need only advert to two others, *viz.*, the pecuniary claims of His Majesty's Government against the Saudi Government, and the position as regards British nationality in Saudi Arabia. The latter question seemed to be progressing on satisfactory lines and I would not pursue it. I did not wish at this moment to pursue definitely the question of the two debts of the Saudi Government to His Majesty's Government, but I reminded Fuad Bey that we were very anxious to dispose of the matter, which was one on which we were faced with strong insistence on the part of the Treasury. I recalled our proposal that the trivial MacDonnell debt should be settled out of hand, and the liquidation of the larger debt placed on a business basis. I added that I had induced His Majesty's Government to postpone the matter pending a clearing up of the situation between Saudi Arabia and the Yemen. That situation had now been liquidated, and I had again reminded Sheikh Yussuf Yasin of the debts shortly before leaving Jedda.

8. Fuad Bey threw out a personal suggestion that perhaps His Majesty's Government might now see their way to promote the flotation of a small loan in this country, sufficient to enable the floating debt of his Government to be paid off. He outlined in very general terms a scheme for the issue of bonds. I received this suggestion very guardedly, but promised to report it. I explained that the matter was outside my sphere and that I could not judge of the possibilities, though I had no reason to think that the prospect of raising money for Saudi Arabia would be any better now than it had been in 1932.

9. In conclusion, I told Fuad Bey, with reference to what had passed at the third meeting about the Jedda-Port Sudan cable, that there was no hope of bringing any adequately equipped representative of the Sudan Government into a discussion of the matter before he left London. I had, however, just seen a representative of Cable and Wireless (Limited), and had suggested that he should meet Fuad Bey. This gentleman had agreed, subject to the reservation that any proposals which might emerge would have to be submitted to the board of the company. The question of Saudi telegraphic communications had arisen in three aspects, *viz.*, cable rates, the position in regard to the present working agreement between the joint owners of the cable (*i.e.*, the Government of the Sudan and the

Hejaz) and the Eastern Telegraph Company, and the wish of the Saudi Government to establish wireless communication between Hasa and the outer world. I thought that an entirely non-committal discussion would serve to put those concerned in possession of each other's views and desiderata.

10. Fuad Bey agreed to meet a representative of Cable and Wireless (Limited), and it was arranged that they should meet to-morrow morning at the Foreign Office, I being present.

A. RYAN.

September 24, 1934.

[E 5997/2429/25]

No. 23.

*Summary of Discussion at Fifth Meeting with Fuad Bey Hamza, held at the Foreign Office on September 24, 1934.*

IT had originally been arranged to continue at this meeting the discussion begun at the second meeting (E 5908) regarding the eastern and south-eastern frontiers of Saudi Arabia. The instructions which Fuad Bey had been expecting in regard to this question had not, however, arrived, and it was not possible to make any further progress with it. It was arranged that, if these instructions did not arrive before Fuad Bey's departure from England, Sheikh Hafiz would, on their receipt, acquaint the Foreign Office with their tenor.

2. Mr. Rendel asked that the Foreign Office might be given as full an account as possible of King Ibn Saud's views on the frontier problem well in advance of the opening of the proposed negotiations at Jedda. This would save a good deal of delay and reference home when the negotiations began. He added that he did not wish to begin by seeming over-optimistic with regard to the negotiations over this particular question. There were certain to be many points in regard to which the two sides would not see eye to eye. For instance, Fuad Bey had at the second meeting mentioned the Murra and Manasir as tribes which King Ibn Saud was likely to claim as his subjects. So far as the Murra were concerned, there was perhaps some reason to consider that they were closely connected with Saudi Arabia. The Manasir, on the other hand, seemed to be of more doubtful allegiance, and were stated to be largely dependent on the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi. Again, Fuad Bey had mentioned a claim as far south as the Qara Mountains. His Majesty's Government would certainly not be able to agree to anything so extensive. He mentioned these points to show that all would not necessarily be plain sailing. He was confident, however, that a friendly and reasonable settlement could be reached, and Sir A. Ryan would certainly make every effort to reach one, though he would necessarily be bound on many points by his instructions from home. Fuad Bey stated that Sheikh Hafiz Wahba would also be available to help in the negotiations in Jedda, since he was proceeding on leave to Saudi Arabia at the end of the year.

3. In the discussion which followed, an opportunity was taken to remind Fuad Bey that the chief desideratum on the side of His Majesty's Government in any general settlement would be a satisfactory settlement as regards commercial relations between Saudi Arabia and Koweit. Fuad Bey suggested at one point that it might be better to balance this question against the problem of the oil concession in the Koweit Neutral Zone, rather than against that of the south-eastern frontier. He was, however, given no encouragement to pursue this line of thought. Sir Andrew Ryan observed that a general settlement should be of the greatest advantage to King Ibn Saud in pursuit of his policy of consolidating his régime in Arabia.

4. The question of slavery was again touched upon, but it was clear that Fuad Bey was not in a position to add anything more precise to what he had previously said regarding the possibility of such action by Ibn Saud as would justify His Majesty's Government in renouncing their present right of manumission.

5. At the close of the meeting Fuad Bey mentioned that his Government might perhaps feel inclined, during the forthcoming negotiations, to raise once more the question of the possible entry of Saudi Arabia into the League of Nations. The proposed general settlement would remove one of the factors which



had in the past been considered a possible obstacle to the admission of Saudi Arabia to the League, namely, that country's lack of fixed frontiers. Mr. Rendel reminded Fuad Bey that the existence of slavery in Saudi Arabia had also in the past been mentioned as a possible obstacle. Fuad Bey replied that this question also was to be discussed during the negotiations, and if, as was to be hoped, some progress were made with it, it might be possible for Saudi Arabia to follow the precedent of Ethiopia and apply for admission to the League even in advance of the total abolition of slavery.

6. Fuad Bey also mentioned the subject of the indebtedness of his Government to His Majesty's Government, and adverted to the personal suggestion he had made to Sir A. Ryan earlier in the day. He emphasised, however, the entirely unofficial character of this suggestion, and the matter was not further pursued.

*Eastern Department, Foreign Office,  
September 24, 1934.*

[E 6018/4/25]

No. 24.

*Sixth and Seventh Meetings with Fuad Bey Hamza, held at the Foreign Office  
on September 25, 1934.*

(KOWEIT NEUTRAL ZONE OIL CONCESSION.)

THE sixth meeting began at 12 noon.

The following were present:—

Mr. Rendel.

Fuad Bey Hamza (Deputy Saudi Arabian Minister for Foreign Affairs).

Sheikh Hafiz Wahba (Saudi Arabian Minister in London).

Sir A. Ryan.

Mr. Laithwaite (India Office).

Mr. Johnstone.

The subject for discussion was the proposed oil concession in the Koweit Neutral Zone—an area between Saudi Arabia and Koweit, over which, under the Frontier Convention of the 2nd December, 1922, King Ibn Saud and the Sheikh of Koweit have equal rights.

Mr. Rendel asked Fuad Bey to explain the position and the views of the Saudi Government on this question.

Fuad Bey stated that he had little to add to what he had already said to Sir A. Ryan. The Saudi Government were naturally anxious that the oil in this area should be profitably exploited. They had been approached by a British group (represented by Mr. Ydlibi of Manchester, acting on behalf of the Arabian Development Syndicate) in connexion with the Saudi interest in this concession. Unfortunately, the hands of the Saudi Government were tied by the option<sup>(1)</sup> which, as His Majesty's Government were aware, they had already given to the Standard Oil Company of California, in respect of the neutral zone, when granting that company their concession over the Hasa Coast. This option provided, *inter alia*, that, if the Sheikh of Koweit should agree for his part to the grant of the neutral zone concession to some other party on any specified terms, the Standard Oil Company of California would be entitled to offer to take up the concession, in so far as the Saudi share in it was concerned, on the same (or better) terms, in which case the Saudi Government would be obliged to accept their candidature.

Fuad Bey was reminded that there was no question of Saudi or Koweiti "shares" in this concession—a phrase which he had once or twice used. No part of the concession could be separately granted by either of the rulers concerned, but the concession could only be granted jointly by both rulers.

<sup>(1)</sup> See text at Annex A.

Fuad Bey agreed, and admitted that the Saudi Government were not free to dispose of the concession or any part of it, except in agreement with the Sheikh of Koweit. At the same time they were committed, in so far as their own rights were concerned, to the Standard Oil Company, to the extent of the option. They were therefore anxious to reach some agreement with His Majesty's Government and the Sheikh of Koweit as to the best course of action to be pursued.

Mr. Rendel pointed out that the question, which was already sufficiently difficult, had been greatly complicated by the option granted by the Saudi Government to the Standard Oil Company of California in advance of any agreement with the Sheikh. The Saudi Government now suggested an agreement with His Majesty's Government and the Sheikh about the concession; but such an agreement should have preceded the grant of the option. The difficulties of the situation had now been very greatly increased.

Fuad Bey agreed that this might have been preferable, but the option had in fact been given, and it was no good going back over the past. It was a situation of practical fact. The difficulty would disappear if the Sheikh agreed to the grant of the concession to an applicant such as the Arabian Development Syndicate, on terms which the Standard Oil Company proved unwilling to cap, with the result that their option, which they must exercise within thirty days, would lapse. Failing this, Fuad Bey suggested an effort to promote a combination between the Standard Oil of California and British interests, such as the Arabian Development Syndicate, as had been done, for instance, in the case of the United States and British interests competing for the Koweit oil concession, so that, agreement having thus been reached between the competitors, the option would no longer matter.

Mr. Rendel replied that if the option could be eliminated as a result of some other group putting forward proposals which the Standard Oil Company decided not to cap, the situation would, of course, be greatly simplified. It would then presumably be possible for these applicants to put forward to the Sheikh of Koweit firm proposals which they would be in a position to implement, and which would, of course, be considered on their merits. But His Majesty's Government could not possibly tie their hands or those of the Sheikh of Koweit until the complication of the option was out of the way and a firm offer could be made to the Sheikh.

As regards the suggestion that His Majesty's Government and the Saudi Government should endeavour to promote a combination of the Standard Oil Company with British interests, he explained in the first place that His Majesty's Government were not in a position to exercise such influence on any oil companies. The question of possible combinations between the various oil groups was one which only the oil groups themselves could decide, on commercial and economic grounds; but such combinations were often matters of great difficulty, owing to the complicated relations and understandings existing between the various oil groups.

Fuad Bey nevertheless considered that the idea of a combination between the groups was the most hopeful line to follow, and he was confident that the Standard Oil could be induced to arrive at some understanding with the British group at present competing with them (*i.e.*, the Arabian Development Syndicate).

Mr. Rendel suggested that in that case it was for the Saudi Government to clear up the situation as it affected the two groups so as to make it possible for a firm offer to be made to the Sheikh of Koweit.

Fuad Bey enquired as to the Sheikh's attitude towards the matter.

Sir A. Ryan said that, so far as he knew, no approach had been made to the Sheikh. Mr. Ydlibi or his agent at Jedda had told Sir A. Ryan at an earlier stage that the syndicate were practically assured of the Sheikh's consent to their proposals, but this appeared to have been an exaggeration, due perhaps to Mr. Ydlibi's optimism.

Mr. Laithwaite confirmed Sir A. Ryan's belief that no one had so far approached the Sheikh of Koweit. Mr. Ydlibi and Mr. Janson, of the Arabian Development Syndicate, had wished to approach him. They had claimed that



they were already assured of the concession as far as the Saudi rights in it were concerned, and that the Standard Oil Company of California were definitely out of the running. Subsequent enquiries had shown that these statements were incorrect, and they had recently been told that they should clear up the position with the Saudi Government before proceeding further as regards the Sheikh.

*Fuad Bey* admitted that there had been a misunderstanding on the part of his Government during his absence in Asir as to the effect of the option. He had cleared this up on his return with Sir A. Ryan. The position was that his Government were willing to grant the concession, so far as their rights were concerned, to the Arabian Development Syndicate, but could not do so definitely unless the Sheikh of Koweit were also willing to give it to the syndicate, and the Standard Oil Company of California then refused to take the concession up on the same terms. It was for this reason that he suggested a combination between the two groups under the auspices of His Majesty's Government and the Saudi Government.

In the course of further discussion, *Sir A. Ryan* emphasized the consideration that His Majesty's Government could not commit themselves to the position that only the two groups which had been mentioned should be considered. The discovery of oil in commercial quantities at Bahrein had stimulated widespread interest in potential oil-fields elsewhere in Arabia and it might well be that other parties, independent both of Standard Oil and the Arabian Development Syndicate, might wish to apply to the Sheikh of Koweit.

*Mr. Laithwaite* endorsed this and pointed out that His Majesty's Government could not undertake to compel the Sheikh to accept one or other of the two groups mentioned as a combination of both.

*Mr. Rendel* reaffirmed the view that in any case, as regards the two groups in question, it was for the Saudi Government to clear up the position. Other candidates might also come forward and a period of competitive bargaining might ensue. This might cause considerable delay and moreover there were other questions to be considered, such as the necessity for an agreement between Governments regarding jurisdiction and protection in the area to be conceded.

*Fuad Bey* suggested that there would be advantage in having as many competitors for the concession as possible.

*Mr. Rendel* observed that this was not necessarily the case and cited the example of the proposed concession for Koweit itself. A strong rivalry had ended in an agreement between two competitors, and it might well happen in the present case that efforts to stimulate competition unduly might similarly defeat their own object.

The further discussion was to some extent repetition, and rather involved. It turned largely on (a) *Fuad Bey's* efforts to elucidate the attitude of His Majesty's Government, who might, he feared, be adverse to the participation of the Standard Oil Company of California, to whom the Saudi Government were committed to the extent of the option, and (b) his efforts to show that a combination of interests would afford the best solution and could be adapted to the desiderata of His Majesty's Government by securing that the parties to the combine should form a company of British nationality.

As regards (a), *Mr. Rendel* made it clear that His Majesty's Government could not be guided by purely national considerations. They would certainly, in the case of a foreign company, require certain safeguards; but the advantage to be derived by the Sheikh of Koweit from the concession would be a primary consideration.

As regards (b), *Fuad Bey* suggested that His Majesty's Government and the Saudi Government might at least agree on certain principles and developed his suggestion that the groups now in view might be brought to form jointly a subsidiary British company. He thought that the Saudi Government might find means to induce Standard Oil of California to agree to this.

*Mr. Rendel* feared that a combination between a company as powerful as Standard Oil of California and one so comparatively weak in resources as the

Arabian Development Syndicate would result in the virtual absorption of the latter by the former. He dwelt also on the difficulty of bringing pressure to bear on oil companies to effect combines, on the delicate nature of the play of interests involved in the creation of subsidiary companies, on the fact that the official nationality of a subsidiary might be illusory, and on the circumstance that any applicant for the concession would be at the mercy of the Standard Oil Company of California, so long as the latter enjoyed its rights under the option.

*Sir A. Ryan* pointed out that in fact the technical nationality of an exploiting company was of small importance, compared with the financial interests in it.

*Mr. Rendel* agreed, and repeated that His Majesty's Government would probably in any case require special safeguards in the case of any company which was not entirely British. He then suggested that, as it was already late, the meeting should be resumed later in the day. This was agreed to.

Before the meeting ended, *Sir A. Ryan* drew *Fuad Bey's* attention to a statement which *Mr. Ydlibi* or his agent in Jedda had made to *Sir A. Ryan* personally, that under no circumstances would the Arabian Development Syndicate combine with Standard Oil of California. This seemed to him material to what *Fuad Bey* had been suggesting, although such a statement might not hold for ever. The subject was not pursued, but *Fuad Bey* intimated in an undertone that the combination might be feasible, in spite of what had been said to *Sir A. Ryan*.

The seventh meeting was held at 6 P.M. on the same day, with the same attendance.

*Mr. Rendel* gave a brief résumé of what appeared to be the position. *Fuad Bey* had suggested that an agreement should be reached between the Saudi Government, His Majesty's Government and the Sheikh of Koweit as to the conditions on which an oil concession should be granted in the Koweit Neutral Zone. But even if this had not been impracticable on other grounds, the Saudi Government were, in fact, precluded from reaching any definite agreement with the Sheikh of Koweit about the proposed concession, since, whatever agreement might be made, the Standard Oil Company of California could always come in under the terms of their option, cap any other offer that might have been made, and oblige the Saudi Government to support their application. The position thus was that no one except the Standard Oil Company of California could at present make a really firm offer which they could in fact carry out, since the Standard Oil would always be entitled to a preferential treatment as regards the Saudi rights, if they wished to claim it. This being so, the only really practical agreement which could be reached between the Saudi Government, His Majesty's Government and the Sheikh would be to give a concession to the Standard Oil Company if they were prepared to take it up, or to some combination in which they would be the dominant partner—though such a combination seemed unlikely. As *Mr. Rendel* had already explained, this was out of the question, as His Majesty's Government and the Sheikh could not tie their hands, and the Sheikh must be free to deal with any applicant who might apply.

If the Standard Oil Company of California, or any combination to which they would agree, could put forward a firm proposal to the Sheikh of Koweit, that proposal would be considered on its merits. But there seemed no reason why the Standard Oil Company should wish to take the initiative in putting forward such a proposal, since they were completely safeguarded by the option and could comfortably wait until some other applicant put forward a proposal, when they could decide whether to cap it or not.

*Fuad Bey* enquired whether there were no means of tempting other oil companies to bid for the concession.

*Mr. Rendel* replied that His Majesty's Government had no means of bringing pressure to bear on any oil company in this sense. In the first place, any company making a proposal would know that whatever proposal it made was



liable to be capped by the Standard Oil Company, who would be entitled, under its option, to offer similar or better terms. This would act as a great deterrent to other applicants, and greatly complicate their task in deciding what would be a fair price to offer for the concession.

Secondly, he believed that the oil companies were likely to adopt a cautious policy towards this area. Wasteful exploitation of the world's oil resources in the past had now led the oil companies to proceed with great deliberation in the development of new territories. Most of the big oil companies already had large areas to draw on. The Standard Oil of California themselves were already engaged in the exploitation of a much larger area in Hasa, adjacent to the Neutral Zone. They would thus have no particular desire to hasten the exploitation of the Neutral Zone itself, and it might well be to their own best interest to use their option merely to prevent the exploitation of that area by any other group.

In the circumstances, it might be very difficult either to get any other company to make a firm offer or to do anything which would have the effect of bringing the Standard Oil Company's option to an end, and it looked very much as though a deadlock might be reached.

In reply to an enquiry by Fuad Bey as to whether Mr. Ydlibi could not with advantage make a direct approach to the Sheikh of Kuwait, Mr. Laithwaite pointed out that, so long as the option remained in force, Mr. Ydlibi was not in a position to make any firm offer to the Sheikh. It would be necessary for His Majesty's Government to make the situation quite clear to the Sheikh in the event of any approach to him by the syndicate.

Sir A. Ryan then put forward the following purely personal and tentative suggestion: The clause embodying the option was so worded as to treat the Neutral Zone as though it were part of a large area which was otherwise Saudi territory, and, indeed, referred to it as the "so-called" Neutral Zone, doubtless owing to a slip. Would it not be possible for the Saudi Government to get rid of the option as regards the Neutral Zone by persuading the Standard Oil Company of California to accept in exchange for their rights in the Neutral Zone similar rights in respect of an equivalent tract of territory not at present covered by their concession, but within purely Saudi territory?

Fuad Bey did not seem inclined to pursue this suggestion; but he put forward, again quite personally and unofficially, an alternative suggestion that the Neutral Zone should be bisected, either for purposes of the concession only, in which case the concession in the northern half would be within the gift of the Sheikh of Kuwait only, and that for the southern half within the gift of the Saudi Government only, or by a definitive political partition, a new frontier being drawn across the middle of the zone, the northern half being completely incorporated in Kuwait and the southern half completely incorporated in Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Rendel said that he thought that the first suggestion, *i.e.*, for a partition in respect of the oil rights only, would be open to serious objections, particularly as the questions of jurisdiction, protection, &c., which were in any case likely to lead to difficulty, would remain unsolved. On the other hand, although the matter would obviously have to be very carefully looked into, and he could not express any definite opinion at this stage, the second suggestion seemed to him to offer distinct possibilities. The existence of the Neutral Zone had certainly led to a great deal of difficulty, and if any oil concession were eventually given to a foreign company in it, these difficulties would be by no means at an end, since, as he had indicated at an earlier stage, it would be necessary to consider very carefully the arrangements to be made for protection, jurisdiction, &c. If, however, the zone were to be bisected and the two halves of it were to be organically absorbed into Kuwait and Saudi Arabia respectively, many of these questions would no longer arise, and a great deal of difficulty might be avoided. On the other hand, it would be necessary to consider the difficulties very carefully. In the first place, it would be necessary to know the precise reasons for which the zone had been originally created, and to make quite sure that they no longer operated. Moreover, he was under the impression that the Neutral Zone represented approximately the area of migration of the Awazim tribe; and there might well

turn out to be insuperable objections to the bisection of an area inhabited by a single nomadic tribe, since this might lead to difficulties over allegiance, administration, taxation, &c. The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf and the Political Agent, Kuwait, happened at present both to be on leave in this country, and Mr. Rendel suggested that they might both be urgently consulted.

Mr. Laithwaite undertook to arrange this, and agreed that at first sight Fuad Bey's suggestion looked as though it might be well worth pursuing, if only because it would afford a solution of the very thorny problem of the arrangements to be made for the exercise of jurisdiction and the grant of protection in the Neutral Zone.

Fuad Bey explained that he had put forward this suggestion only as a last resort. He would still much prefer that a joint concession should be given, and still hoped that it might be possible for the Arabian Development Syndicate to make proposals either independently or in combination with the Standard Oil Company of California.

Mr. Rendel repeated some of the objections which had already been mentioned to this proposal, which in any case seemed likely to prove impracticable, in view of the terms of the Standard Oil Company's option.

As a result of the present discussion, three alternative solutions had been suggested:—

- (1) To eliminate the option which had been given to the Standard Oil Company of California by getting some other company, such as the Arabian Development Syndicate, to put forward definite proposals with a view to bringing the Standard Oil Company into the open, and getting them either to make a higher bid or to abandon their rights. This was really no solution, however, since the Standard Oil Company were entitled by their option to bid against any offer made to, and accepted by, the Sheikh of Kuwait; so that it would presumably be impossible to eliminate the option by such means in advance of any approach to the Sheikh of Kuwait, while any approach to the Sheikh of Kuwait, while the option still existed, would be open to the objections already discussed earlier in the meeting.
- (2) For the Saudi Government to persuade the Standard Oil Company of California to abandon their option over the Neutral Zone in exchange for new rights for an area of equal value elsewhere in Saudi Arabia.
- (3) To divide the Neutral Zone between Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Mr. Rendel was inclined to think that the last of these suggestions was the only one likely to offer a way out of the existing deadlock; and, although it was understood that His Majesty's Government could not possibly commit themselves on the subject at this stage, it was agreed that it should be urgently explored in consultation with Colonel Fowle and Colonel Dickson, and that if it was desired to pursue the matter, the Saudi Minister in London should be informed of the result.

Meanwhile, Fuad Bey undertook to let His Majesty's Government know as soon as possible if any other solution of the difficulty occurred to him.

*Eastern Department, Foreign Office,  
September 26, 1934.*



[E 2859/4/25]

Annex.

*Text<sup>(\*)</sup> of Articles in certain unpublished Agreements between the Saudi Arabian Government and the Standard Oil Company of California, giving the Company an option to claim Preferential Rights with regard to the Grant of any future Oil Concession in the Koweit Neutral Zone, so far as the Saudi Interest in that Concession is concerned.*

## I.

In addition to the grant of the exclusive area described in article 2 of this agreement, the Government also hereby grants to the Company a preference right to acquire an oil concession covering the balance of eastern Saudi Arabia extending as far west of the westerly boundary exclusive of the area, as the contact between the sedimentary and igneous formations. This preference right includes such rights as the Government may now have, or may hereafter acquire, in the so-called "Neutral Zone" bordering on the Persian Gulf to the south of Koweit. The nature of this preference right is to be hereafter agreed upon.

## II.

The Company's preference right to acquire an oil concession covering the so-called "Neutral Zone" referred to in article 3 of the Saudi Arabian Concession shall be a right equal to, with regard to rights of the Government in the Neutral Zone, the terms and conditions which may be obtained by the Sheikh of Koweit for a concession covering his rights in the Neutral Zone. In the absence of any grant of an oil concession covering such rights of the Sheikh of Koweit the Government will endeavour to reach a formal agreement with the Sheikh of Koweit whereby the Company will be permitted to acquire an oil concession covering rights of the Government and the Sheikh of Koweit in the Neutral Zone. In either of these two events the Company shall have a period of thirty days from the date it received written notice setting forth in full the terms and conditions of the oil concession covering the rights of the Sheikh of Koweit in the Neutral Zone, or covering the terms of the proposed concession embracing the rights of the Government and the Sheikh of Koweit in the Neutral Zone, as the case may be, within which to decide and to notify the Government whether or not the Company wishes to acquire the oil concession on such terms. If the Company does not wish to do so, the Government is free to negotiate with others, but if the oil concession [?] is proposed [?] to be granted to others on the same terms as those offered to the Company the preference right of the Company shall continue, at least as long as the provisions of article 7 of the Saudi Arabian Concession remain in force.

(\*) The text is given as telegraphed, and must be regarded as subject to slight verbal amendment.

[E 6344/5841/25]

No. 25.

# RECORD OF A MEETING AT THE FOREIGN OFFICE ON SEPTEMBER 28 REGARDING THE DEFINITION OF THE SAUDI- TRANSJORDAN FRONTIER.

Mr. RENDEL presided at the meeting, which was attended by Sir A. Ryan (His Majesty's Minister at Jedda) and Major Glubb (Chief Desert Control Officer in Transjordan); Mr. Blaxter of the Colonial Office; Colonel McLeod and Major Fryer of the War Office; Group-Captain Peck and Group-Captain McClaughry of the Air Ministry; and Mr. Johnstone.

2. Mr. RENDEL and SIR A. RYAN explained the general position of this question. After his conversations with King Ibn Saud at Taif shortly before his departure on leave, Sir A. Ryan had suggested that it might be desirable to arrange a general settlement of all the major questions outstanding with the

Saudi Government, on the basis of making a fairly liberal concession to Ibn Saud as regards his eastern and south-eastern frontiers, subject to a satisfactory agreement being reached on other matters. The Middle East Official Sub-Committee had considered and endorsed this proposal on the 13th September, and advantage had been taken of the recent visit of the Saudi Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs to London to put it before him. Fuad Bey Hamza had shown himself willing to consider in principle the possibility of a settlement on the lines suggested.

3. One of the questions which might possibly be brought into a settlement was that of the Saudi-Transjordan frontier. Various difficulties had arisen about this frontier, and it might be to the advantage of His Majesty's Government and of the Transjordan Government to take this opportunity to try to get these difficulties cleared up once and for all. It had appeared from the conversations with Fuad Bey that King Ibn Saud was not prepared to consider the possibility of abandoning his claims to the Aqaba-Maan district, although he was willing that the present arrangement with regard to that area, as embodied in the letters exchanged at the time of the conclusion of the Treaty of Jedda, should continue. It had, however, been tentatively suggested to Fuad Bey that, while the problem of the Transjordan-Hejaz frontier might be left in abeyance, the opportunity of a general settlement might be taken to clarify the situation in regard to the Transjordan-Nejd frontier, where various local uncertainties might need some clarification.

4. Fuad Bey had taken the line that, if the Aqaba-Maan question were left in abeyance, his Government would prefer not to touch on the *de facto* Transjordan-Hejaz frontier at all; but he had not excluded the possibility of a clarification in regard to the Transjordan-Nejd frontier, regarding which it was recognised that there had been occasional controversy, notably regarding Hazim.

5. The purpose of the present meeting was to determine, so far as was possible on the information at present available, whether it would in fact be worth while to include this question (*i.e.*, a "clarification" of the Transjordan-Nejd frontier) in the proposed general settlement, the negotiation of which might be expected to start soon after Sir A. Ryan's return to Jedda in December. The question would fit naturally into the suggestion which had been made that a general redefinition of the frontiers of Saudi Arabia should be agreed on, as far as possible, as part of a general Anglo-Saudi settlement. In view of the uncertainty which existed regarding various parts of the frontier, it might be very desirable to take this opportunity to clear up the whole matter. On the other hand, it was possible that any attempt at a redefinition of the frontier might either not improve the position or merely lead to fresh disputes with the Saudi Government, and that for this reason it might be better to continue on the present indefinite basis.

6. Mr. Rendel further explained that so far as the purely legal aspect of the question was concerned, the Foreign Office were advised that there was solid ground for contending that the true position of the Transjordan-Nejd frontier must be deduced from the frontier line drawn by the negotiators of the Hadda Agreement on the 1918 edition of the 1:1,000,000 international map of Asia (which is specifically referred to in article 1 of the Hadda Agreement) in relation to the physical features shown on that map, and not in relation to the lines of latitude and longitude marked thereon, which in the view of the Foreign Office, had only been quoted by the negotiators for convenience in describing a frontier which had in fact been agreed on on the basis of the physical features only. The 1918 map had now been proved inaccurate, and the relationship of the physical features to the latitude and longitude was in fact quite different from that shown on it. But in the Foreign Office view, particularly as the 1918 map was referred to in the text, the system of physical features as shown on that map was still the determining feature rather than the (explanatory and supplementary) geographical descriptions given in the relevant documents.

7. If the Transjordan-Nejd frontier could now be redefined on the basis of the 1918 map, *i.e.*, as drawn on that map in relation to the physical features only, the difficulties which had arisen might be disposed of. A solution on these lines would have two particular merits: (a) It would render it unnecessary to take up separately each of the disputed points on the frontier, *e.g.*, the question of Hazim; and (b) if the southern terminal point of the frontier (the so-called point E) could once be established in a manner satisfactory to His Majesty's



Government, it might greatly ease the position in regard to the Transjordan-Hejaz frontier, of which the termination of the Transjordan-Nejd frontier, wherever it might be, was, in fact, the key point. The present position was that the so-called point E had been marked on the latest sketch maps of this area solely according to the geographical description in the Hadda Agreement, *i.e.*, at the intersection of meridian 38° E. and parallel 29° 35' N. But if the Foreign Office interpretation of the Hadda Agreement were adopted, and point E were established in the same relation to the physical features as on the 1918 map referred to in the agreement, irrespective of its description by geographical co-ordinates, it might be found to lie from 10 to 20 miles further to the south-east, *i.e.*, between the Jebel Waila and the Jebel Shibliya ridges, and some 5 miles or so west-north-west of the south-westerly end of the latter ridge. Major Glubb pointed out (at a later stage of the discussion) that the fact that the bluff known as Maizila (which is shown on the 1918 map as coincident with the frontier to the north of the Jebel Waila) appears on the revised sketch map as very much further to the east, but as in much the same relation to the Jebel Waila as in the 1918 map, seemed to suggest that the physical features in this area might lie in approximately the same relationship to each other as shown on the 1918 map, notwithstanding the general inaccuracy of that map, and this would further strengthen the case for accepting the interpretation of point E suggested by the Foreign Office. It might then be that, if this interpretation could be established, and the true point E were thus found to lie 10 or 20 miles further to the south-east than had hitherto been supposed, a line drawn from it (as the true terminal point of the Transjordan-Nejd frontier) to a point 2 miles south of Mudawara Station (in accordance with the definition of the Transjordan-Hejaz frontier laid down by His Majesty's Government in Sir G. Clayton's note of the 19th May, 1927) would leave within Transjordan territory the present R.A.F. landing ground to the south of the Jebel Tubeik, which was the point of most importance to His Majesty's Government. If such a result could be secured, it would be well worth trying to reach an agreement with the Saudi Government with a view to securing the definite establishment of point E in this manner.

8. SIR A. RYAN suggested that in effect the present problem raised three questions:—

- (a) Would it be to the general interest of His Majesty's Government to raise the Transjordan frontier question at all with the Saudi Government?
- (b) If so, what would be the best method of approaching the problem? Should His Majesty's Government suggest a written redefinition of the frontier in the first instance, or a delimitation of the frontier on the ground by a frontier delimitation commission?
- (c) In any case, would it be possible to establish the southern terminal of the Transjordan-Nejd frontier (point E) in such a way as to give His Majesty's Government what they required on the Transjordan-Hejaz frontier (*i.e.*, the Jebel Tubeik landing ground) without any further redefinition of that frontier?

9. In the ensuing discussion these points were taken in the reverse order. As regards point (c), it was agreed that the recent survey operations to the east and south-east of the Jebel Tubeik had not provided sufficient material for it to be yet possible to state exactly where point E would fall if established purely in relation to the physical features of the 1918 map.

10. THE WAR OFFICE REPRESENTATIVES explained that the 1918 map was so inaccurate that the physical features shown on it might either not exist at all, or only exist in a very different relationship to each other from that shown on the map.

MAJOR GLUBB, on the other hand, explained that the relevant physical features, *i.e.*, the Maizila bluff, the Wadi Thanayya, the Jebel Waila and the Jebel Shibliya ridges, were, in fact, well-marked features, well known to the local inhabitants, and bearing much the same relationship to each other as shown on the 1918 map. It was pointed out that no survey had been carried out over this particular area, in deference to what were understood to be the wishes of the Foreign Office.

SIR A. RYAN explained, however, that the caveat which he had put forward, and which had led to this restriction, was only intended to apply to the carrying out of a survey over areas which were indisputably Saudi on any interpretation of the relevant instruments.

Both SIR A. RYAN and MAJOR GLUBB pointed out that the part of Saudi Arabia immediately adjoining the area in question did not appear to be effectively occupied by the Saudi authorities, and that there would, therefore, be no objection to carrying out an aerial survey for, at any rate, 20 miles to the south-east of point E as provisionally marked on the latest sketch maps on the basis of the geographical co-ordinates.

11. It was agreed that on the present data no definite opinion could be formed as to whether the Foreign Office interpretation of point E would bring it sufficiently far to the south-east to enable a straight line to be drawn therefrom to a point 2 miles south of Mudawara in such a way as to include the Jebel Tubeik landing-ground in Transjordan. The next and most urgent step was therefore to carry out an immediate aerial survey on this area, so that this point might be cleared up.

12. Until this point was decided, it would be impossible to say whether it would be generally in the interest of His Majesty's Government to raise the Transjordan frontier question at all with the Saudi Government (Sir A. Ryan's question (a)), since, if point E could not be satisfactorily established, it would probably be better not to pursue the matter at this stage at all.

13. As regards the remainder of the Transjordan-Nejd frontier, MR. RENDEL pointed out that there might be considerable advantage in establishing our interpretation of the frontier in relation to the Wadi Sirhan, since, if the frontier was crystallised on the basis of the geographical co-ordinates alone, a wide strip of country on the edge of the Wadi Sirhan would be lost to Transjordan, with consequences which, as Major Glubb had pointed out in one of his reports a year or two ago, might be serious for the local tribes. Colonel McLeod was inclined to take the view that the physical features shown on the 1918 map on this area were, in fact, so uncertain that it would be impossible to establish any frontier satisfactorily in this area without a very careful new survey. But it was agreed that any survey over the edge of the Wadi Sirhan would be impossible without Saudi concurrence, since the Saudi Government exercise full administrative sovereignty over the Wadi Sirhan, so that the situation is quite different from that existing in the neighbourhood of point E. On the other hand, Major Glubb stated that the Wadi Sirhan did possess a definite edge closely corresponding with the contour line shown on the 1918 map (in spite of the admitted inaccuracy of that map), so that it would not necessarily be impossible to establish in advance of a further general survey a frontier line corresponding to that shown on the 1918 map in relation to the physical features on that map.

14. As regards Sir A. Ryan's second question, it was thought that, if the matter were proceeded with, there might be advantages in aiming at the appointment of a Delimitation Commission rather than in trying to secure a new written definition of the frontier. Such a commission might be given a certain measure of discretion enabling it to make minor local adjustments on either side. It could make its own survey, and thus dispose of many minor difficulties in the course of its operations; it would be inclined to tackle problems on common-sense lines and in the light of local factors and conditions; while the superior technical knowledge and skill of any British representatives on it would place them at a considerable advantage *vis-à-vis* the Saudi delegates and might make it easier to secure a reasonable solution of any outstanding difficulties. Mr. Blaxter, however, suggested that there might be possible dangers in the appointment of a Delimitation Commission, unless Ibn Saud had agreed beforehand that the frontier laid down in the Hadda Agreement was as drawn on the 1918 map.

15. The general conclusion of the meeting, however, was that no decision could be reached as to the line to be taken with the Saudi Government, or, indeed, as to whether the question of the Transjordan frontier should be broached at all, until further information was available regarding the geography of the area, and particularly regarding the true position of the physical features in the



neighbourhood of point E. It was agreed that there need be no objection to an immediate extension of the recent survey of the south-east corner of Transjordan up to an approximate position at which point E might lie on the construction of the existing agreements most favourable to Transjordan, since Ibn Saud was unlikely to protest, and, even if he did so, the survey would not have been extended into territory indisputably belonging to Saudi Arabia. It was accordingly agreed that arrangements should at once be put in hand for a supplementary survey on this basis, if it appeared, after further consideration, that the information collected during the recent survey did not sufficiently cover the area in respect of which further information was desired. If a supplementary survey were found to be desirable, the Air Ministry would draft the necessary instructions to the local air authorities in consultation with Major Glubb; and they would seek the concurrence of the other interested Departments in the instructions as soon as they have been drafted.

[E 6127/74/25]

No. 26.

*External Telegraphic Communications of Saudi Arabia.*

THIS subject is adverted to in the general records of the conversations with Fuad Bey Hamza on the 19th September, but it may be convenient to have a separate comprehensive record of all that has passed up to date, as the matter falls to be dealt with independently of the more or less political questions which have been discussed.

2. Following on Fuad Bey's reference to the Eastern Telegraph Company at the third general conversation on the 21st September, it was found impracticable to bring the Sudan Government into any further discussion during the short period of Fuad Bey's stay in London. In any case, that Government, although interested as joint owners of the Jedda-Port Sudan cable,<sup>(1)</sup> are much less effectively concerned than Cable and Wireless (Limited).

3. Marconi's had previously expressed a wish to see me about a report of mine in July on the alleged intention of the Saudi Government to erect a wireless station at Makhlaf in Najran. I took advantage of this to get into touch, through Mr. Farrer of the Department of Overseas Trade, with both Marconi's and Cable and Wireless (Limited). Representatives of the two companies came to see me early on the 24th September, Mr. H. C. Van de Velde for Marconi's and Mr. A. Sabater for Cable and Wireless (Limited).

4. Mr. Van de Velde told me that, since approaching the Department of Overseas Trade, Marconi's had heard from their local agent, Mr. Philby, that there appeared to be no truth in the press report that the Saudi Government intended to erect a new wireless station in Najran. All that was intended was to utilise there one of the existing wireless sets. I told him that I had no information except what had appeared in the *Umm-al-Qura* newspaper before I left Jedda, and that Mr. Philby's report corresponded with what I should have expected. I also said that, although I had mentioned in the same report to the Foreign Office, the presentation of automatic telephones by the Soviet to the Saudi Government, I saw no connexion between the two items of information except that both bore on the general question of Saudi communications. I did not know to what use the Saudi Government intended to put the automatic telephones. Mr. Van de Velde understood from Mr. Philby that they had been moved to Riyadh.

5. With regard to the general question of Saudi Arabia's external communications, Mr. Sabater agreed after some discussion that, while no commitments could be entered into without reference to the board of Cable and Wireless (Limited), it might be useful for representatives of the company to have a quite informal and non-committal discussion with Fuad Bey. I need not record further what passed in my own preliminary conversation with him, as much the same ground was covered later, except that he seemed inclined to think that the monopoly given to the Eastern Telegraph Company by article 6 of

<sup>(1)</sup> See Annex.

their Working Agreement with the joint owners of the Jedda-Port Sudan cable might be held to extend to the whole of Saudi Arabia, and that Cable and Wireless might be themselves imperilling their position by agreeing to any external wireless service. I reminded him that proposals for such a service between Hasa and the outer world were already in train. I said that the legal question regarding the scope of the Eastern Telegraph Company monopoly had never been threshed out, but expressed the purely personal view that the Saudi Government were justified in considering, as they did, that the monopoly clause affected the Hejaz only.

6. As a result of these preliminaries, Captain N. J. C. Lawson, general manager of Cable and Wireless (Limited), and Mr. Sabater, met Fuad Bey and Sheikh Hafiz Wahba under my auspices at 11 A.M. on the 25th September, at the Foreign Office. I explained that my object was to bring about an entirely non-committal exchange of views in the hope of elucidating various questions which had arisen. There were (a) the question of rates for telegrams passing over the cable; (b) the position in regard to the Working Agreement with the Eastern Telegraph Company; and (c) the proposal that a wireless service should be established between Hasa and the outer world.

7. Fuad Bey said that there had been many developments since the Working Agreement had been concluded in 1926, only a few months after the establishment of the Saudi régime in the Hejaz. The situation had been greatly affected by wireless developments. His Government were now hampered by the monopoly given in 1926 to the Eastern Telegraph Company, as regards the Hejaz, which then had a separate Government. They felt that the cable rates were so heavy as to discourage traffic, which might be greatly increased if they were lower. They also thought that they should be free to use wireless for the purpose of certain external communications, *e.g.*, with Syria and Bahrein. At present the Saudi Government were tied to the use of the cable for Hejaz communications. The agreed charge per word was 1 fr. 50 c. gold, but of this only 25 centimes went to the Saudi Government, who were in the position of being a joint owner of the cable, but deriving no profit from it.

8. The representatives of Cable and Wireless (Limited) pointed out that the amount of traffic was small, but entailed as much expenditure as if it were great. They seemed doubtful whether any reduction of the charges would stimulate traffic sufficiently to compensate the company. As regards wireless, they did not think that the Saudi Government realised how costly it would be to provide stations really suitable for external communication and to keep them up efficiently. They suggested that a cable service was much to be preferred. They asked Fuad Bey, without commitment, what his ideas of an acceptable charge would be.

9. Fuad Bey expressed the view that a judgment could only be formed on a study of figures, but intimated that his personal idea of a suitable rate would be 1 fr. per word, half to go to the Saudi Government. In reply to a question, he thought that, if a revised agreement was made, the Saudi Government might be prepared to give the company greater security of tenure by modifying the clause under which the Working Agreement can be terminated at two years' notice, although he thought in principle that this provision was sound, having regard to the effect of changing conditions.

10. In the course of further discussion I observed that, in my opinion, the Saudi Government could hardly expect a reduction in rates, unless they were prepared to give either security of tenure or a guarantee of minimum traffic. I emphasised the peculiar nature of the present traffic, which consisted to a disproportionate extent of official telegrams. I rather thought that His Majesty's Government and the Saudi Government between them accounted for something like 50 per cent. of the total traffic. I suggested that the discussion had enabled each side to appreciate the point of view of the other, and might pave the way for some agreement covering all the questions at issue.

11. It was agreed that the Saudi Government and Cable and Wireless should consider the subject further in the light of what had passed, with a view to definite negotiations. Fuad Bey suggested that such negotiations might conveniently take place in Jedda after my return. I said that, without wishing to impose this view on the company, I should see advantage in a discussion at Jedda, and offered to do anything I could to facilitate it, if the company should agree to send representatives there, although the question of a



new agreement was naturally a matter for settlement on commercial lines between the Government and the company.

12. It was made clear at the close that, if negotiations for a new agreement were undertaken, the object would be to make comprehensive arrangements in regard to the whole of Saudi Arabia, although the arrangements for particular areas might vary.

13. I regret that the submission of this record has been delayed by pressure of other business.

A. RYAN.

*Foreign Office, October 1, 1934.*

#### Annex.

#### PORT SUDAN-JEDDA CABLE AGREEMENTS.

##### (1) *Ownership Agreement.*

It is hereby agreed between the Sudan Government on the one part and the Hejaz Government on the other part, His Britannic Majesty's Government being, in view of their friendly relations with the Hejaz Government and their position in the Sudan, a third and assenting party at the request of those two Governments, as follows:—

1. That the cable formerly known as the Jedda-Suakin Cable and now known as the Port Sudan-Jedda Cable shall become as from the 1st day of January, 1926, the joint property of the Sudan and Hejaz Governments.
2. That the unexpended balance of £E. 33,501-149 m/ms. standing to the credit of the cable account as at the 31st December, 1925, and as shown by the statements prepared and certified by the Sudan Government shall be divided equally between the Sudan and Hejaz Governments.
3. That the parties to this agreement shall, in order to facilitate the better working of the cable, authorise the Eastern Telegraph Company (Limited) to work and maintain the cable communication between Jedda and Port Sudan under an agreement to be concluded between that company and the Sudan and Hejaz Governments jointly.
4. That as from the 1st January, 1926, until such date as the cable is taken over by the Eastern Telegraph Company (Limited), the Hejaz Government undertakes to settle all sums due by that Government in respect of messages transmitted via Port Sudan during this period, or such sums shall be deducted from the half share of the unexpended balance payable to the Hejaz Government under this agreement.

For and on behalf of the Sudan  
Government:

J. L. MAFFEY.

For and on behalf of the Hejaz  
Government:

FEISAL ABDUL AZIZ-AL-SAUD.

(Signed in Arabic.)

For and on behalf of His Britannic Majesty's Government:

S. R. JORDAN.

*December 18, 1926.*

##### (2) *Working Agreements.*

It is hereby agreed between the Sudan and Hejaz Governments, hereafter called the Joint Owners, on the one part, and the Eastern Telegraph Company (Limited), hereafter called the Company, on the other part, as follows:—

1. That both the terminals of the Port Sudan-Jedda Cable, hereafter called the cable, shall be worked (subject to the reservations in article 9 of this agreement), and the cable maintained and kept in good repair by the Company free of charge to the Joint Owners for a period of twenty-five years.
2. That this agreement shall be subject to two years' notice of termination, which may be given at any time after the first two years by the Joint Owners or by the Company.
3. The parties to this agreement agree that a charge of not more than 1 fr. 50 c. gold shall be payable in respect of each word transmitted over the cable, including both terminal charges, and of this charge the sum of 1 fr. 25 c. gold shall, subject to clause 12 hereof, accrue to the Company, who will deal directly with the public in Port Sudan, and the balance of 35 centimes gold shall accrue to the Hejaz Government in respect of services in dealing direct with the public in Jedda.
4. The Company agrees to accept half the cable rate in respect of all Sudan and Hejaz Government telegrams transmitted over the cable.
5. The charges and/or apportionments as set out in article 3 shall be liable to revision after a period of two years from the date of this agreement.
6. The Hejaz Government undertakes not to use for foreign communications its own wireless or cables or the wireless or cables of any other company, and the Company on its part undertakes to secure the communications by wireless in case the cable is out of order. Should the Company be unable to do so, the Hejaz Government will be free to operate its own communications in any way it may find convenient during the period the cable is not working.
7. The Sudan Government undertakes not to use wireless between the Sudan and the Hejaz in competition with the cable.
8. The Hejaz Government agrees to exempt from sanitary, harbour or other dues any cable ship of the Company entering Hejaz waters, and to allow the free importation of all materials landed for the repairs or extension of the cable.
9. In consideration of the fact that the Hejaz Government is anxious to avoid any arrangement which might be construed as foreign interference or intervention in Hejaz local affairs, the Company agree that the Jedda terminal shall be worked by the Hejaz Postal and Telegraph Administration, and the Company shall be liable for the salaries of not more than two of the employees of that administration, the total amount of which shall not exceed the sum of £20 sterling per month. In consideration of this agreement the Hejaz Government agree to invite not more than two persons of the Mahometan faith, to be nominated by the Company, to be employed in the Hejaz Postal and Telegraph Administration for a period not exceeding six months in order that the Hejaz Administration may become acquainted with the routine and procedure of the Company; and during this period of six months the Company shall be liable in respect of the salaries of the persons so nominated only. All salaries are to be paid by the Hejaz Administration and debited to the Company.
10. The parties to this agreement undertake to submit and settle all accounts monthly.
11. The Company agrees to hand back the cable to the Joint Owners upon the expiration of this agreement in good order, having regard to the present condition of the cable.
12. Nothing in this agreement shall absolve the Company from paying to the Sudan Government the sum of 25 centimes of gold per word for all messages from the Hejaz passing over the Sudan Government telegraphs.



13. The present agreement has been drawn up in two languages, English and Arabic, and both texts shall have equal validity. But in the event of any dispute arising owing to a divergence between the two texts, such dispute shall be submitted to His Britannic Majesty's Government and the Government of the Hejaz and settled through the usual diplomatic channels.

For and on behalf of the Hejaz  
Government:

FEISAL ABDUL AZIZ-AL-SAUD.  
(Signed in Arabic.)

For and on behalf of the Eastern Telegraph Company (Limited),  
J. E. BROADBENT.

December 18, 1926.

For and on behalf of the Sudan  
Government:

J. L. MAFFEY.

(3) *Exchange of Notes.*

*His Majesty the King of the Hejaz to the Governor-General of the Sudan.*

(Translation.)

As it is desirable to reserve the freedom of action of each of the Governments of the Sudan and the Hejaz in the agreement to be concluded between them as first party and the Eastern Telegraph Company as second party (Port Sudan-Jedda Cable Agreement), the Hejaz Government holds that, in respect of clause 2 of the agreement between the two Governments themselves, the Sudan Government should be at full liberty to demand the termination of the agreement if they have any valid reason justifying (in their view) such demand, and that in such case the Hejaz Government shall not only be entitled to oppose the demand to terminate, but shall associate themselves with the Sudan Government and jointly demand from the company the termination of the agreement. If, therefore, your Government were to reply recognising the same right to the Hejaz Government, namely, that the Hejaz Government may, whenever they find valid reason which appears to them to justify the termination of the agreement, represent the matter to the Sudan Government, and the Sudan Government shall then consent to the demand of the Hejaz Government for the termination of the agreement and shall jointly with the Hejaz Government require from the company the termination of the agreement in accordance with the stipulations laid down therein (that is to say, to send a notification to the company that the agreement will terminate on the expiration of two years from the date of notification).

In the event of your consenting to this reciprocal undertaking and of your agreeing to consider this letter of ours and your own reply of assent as authoritative texts having the same validity as the clauses of the agreement, we should be prepared to accept the agreement as drawn up and take steps to bring it into effect.

Respects.

(Sealed)

ABDUL AZIZ-BIN-SAUD.

10th Jumada Thani, 1345.  
(December 15, 1926.)

*Governor-General of the Sudan to His Majesty the King of the Hejaz.*

*Khartum, January 19, 1927.*

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Majesty's despatch, dated 10th Jumada Thani, 1345, relative to certain modifications in the agreement to be concluded with the Eastern Telegraph Company.

2. I note that your Majesty's Government holds that, in respect of clause 2 of the agreement between the two Governments themselves, the Sudan Government should be at full liberty to demand the termination of the agreement, if they have any valid reason justifying (in their view) such demand, and that in such case the Hejaz Government shall not only *not* be entitled to oppose the demand to terminate

but shall associate themselves with the Sudan Government and jointly demand from the company the termination of the agreement.

3. I understand further that your Majesty is desirous of reserving the same right to the Hejaz Government, namely, that the Hejaz Government may, whenever they find valid reason justifying (in their view) such demand, be at full liberty to demand the termination of the agreement, and that in such case the Sudan Government shall not only *not* be entitled to oppose the demand to terminate but shall associate themselves with the Hejaz Government and jointly demand from the company the termination of the agreement.

4. I have the honour to inform your Majesty that I agree to this reciprocal undertaking, as set out in paragraphs 2 and 3 above, and I agree to consider your Majesty's despatch (above referred to) and this reply as authoritative texts, having the same validity as the clauses of the agreement.

5. I note that, subject to the above conditions, your Majesty's Government will be prepared to accept the agreements as drawn up and take steps to bring it into effect.

6. I have now signed on behalf of the Sudan Government the Ownership Agreement (between the Hejaz Government and the Sudan Government and His Britannic Majesty's Government as a third and assenting party thereto at the request of the two contracting Governments).

7. I have also signed on behalf of the Sudan Government the Working Agreement between the Hejaz and Sudan Governments, as joint owners, and the Eastern Telegraph Company (Limited), and have transmitted this latter document to the Eastern Telegraph Company (Limited) for their signature.

Please accept, &c.

J. L. MAFFEY.

[E 6160/279/91]

No. 27.

ANGLO-SAUDI RELATIONS.

*South-Eastern Frontiers of Saudi Arabia.—(Record of Conversation with the Saudi Arabian Minister on October 3, 1934.)*

FOLLOWING on the arrangements made at the second meeting with Fuad Bey Hamza on the 20th September, the Saudi-Arabian Minister and Mr. Zada called on Mr. Rendel on the 3rd October ostensibly to inform him of King Ibn Saud's views in regard to the possible revision of the "blue line" frontier. Sir A. Ryan and Mr. Johnstone were also present.

2. Sheikh Hafiz Wahba began by explaining that he had now heard from Ibn Saud, and that the King considered that the frontier should follow existing *de facto* line which had been tacitly, though not formally, agreed upon between himself and the Sheikh of Qatar as the southern limit of the latter's authority. This boundary, though never actually defined, had long been tacitly accepted and had never given rise to any trouble, and the King would be prepared to reach an agreement either with the Sheikh of Qatar direct or with His Majesty's Government on this basis.

3. Mr. Rendel said that this was, of course, only a small portion of the frontier, but that it seemed to him that what the sheikh had just said was really begging the question. His Majesty's Government could not admit any line other than the "blue line," on the ground that it had been tacitly agreed to or accepted and had not given rise to difficulty. It was precisely because no agreement had been reached about the frontier and because difficulties had arisen that the question was now under discussion. Moreover, His Majesty's Government were responsible for the foreign relations of Qatar; there could, therefore, be no question of a direct agreement between the Sheikh of Qatar and Ibn Saud in regard to the frontier. The position was that His Majesty's Government regarded the "blue line" as the legal south-eastern frontier of Saudi Arabia. They were prepared as part of a general settlement not to take their stand on the



strict letter of the law, but to agree to some modification of the line by mutual agreement.

4. What the Minister had said gave a fairly clear indication of what King Ibn Saud's desiderata might be in regard to the Qatar sector of the line. But it was even more important to know Ibn Saud's ideas in regard to the remainder of the "blue line." Fuad Bey, at the meeting on the 20th September, had spoken of claims to the areas inhabited by the Murra and Manasir tribes, and extending as far south as the Qara mountains. The claim to the Manasir might give rise to difficulties, and His Majesty's Government would certainly not be prepared to consider any claims extending as far south as the Qara mountains. What His Majesty's Government wanted to know was how far King Ibn Saud's claims really did extend. It would, for instance, obviously be useless to pursue the discussion if King Ibn Saud were putting forward claims extending right into the territory of Muscat. Before negotiations could be embarked upon, it was really important to know what the King was asking for.

5. The Saudi Minister said that he had received no instructions in regard to anything but the Qatar sector of the frontier. He understood that the King proposed to communicate his views to Sir A. Ryan on the latter's return to Jedda in December, when negotiations would be opened.

6. Sir A. Ryan pointed out that this carried us no further at all than the Saudi Government's last note on the subject.

7. Mr. Rendel said that His Majesty's Government considered it most important to have some indications of King Ibn Saud's claims and desiderata before Sir A. Ryan's departure. He repeated that the present position was that His Majesty's Government took their stand on the "blue line," but that they would be prepared to make some concession in this area as part of a general settlement. But before deciding whether any such settlement were possible, it was essential that they should know what King Ibn Saud was asking for. If King Ibn Saud was claiming virtually the whole of South-Eastern Arabia, it might be useless to pursue the matter. In any case, it was necessary to issue detailed instructions to Sir A. Ryan for his guidance in carrying on any negotiations. These instructions would have to be elaborated in consultation with several other Departments of His Majesty's Government, and it would not be possible to consider them until His Majesty's Government knew what King Ibn Saud wanted in this matter of the south-eastern frontier. He therefore suggested that the Saudi Minister should telegraph to his Government and ask for telegraphic information on this question.

8. Sheikh Hafiz Wahba agreed to telegraph his Government forthwith, but said that the King would probably require time to make enquiries from the tribes, &c., in the area in question.

9. Mr. Rendel pointed out that the King was apparently claiming an extension of his dominions to the east and south-east of the "blue line," on the ground that certain tribes inhabiting certain areas in this part of Arabia had always owed him allegiance. Surely the King must know which tribes owed him allegiance and which did not, and must already have the necessary information as to the areas which were inhabited by the former. King Ibn Saud could hardly claim the allegiance of tribes which he did not know or sovereignty over areas regarding the limits of which he was ignorant.

10. Sir A. Ryan added that King Ibn Saud knew more about this part of Arabia than anyone else, and must certainly already possess all the information required in order to enable him to formulate his claims.

11. It was agreed that the Saudi Minister should put these points to King Ibn Saud by telegraph, and communicate with Mr. Rendel again as soon as he received a reply.

*Eastern Department, Foreign Office,  
October 3, 1934.*

[E 6340/6340/25]

No. 28.

*Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.—(Received October 15.)*

(No. 294. Confidential.)

Sir,

Jedda, September 25, 1934.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 286 of the 18th September, in which I briefly reported Ibn Saud's return to Riyadh from Taif, I have the honour to inform you that, although the King's movements convey the impression that the general situation in this country give no cause for disquietude, I have recently received reports from two sources which would suggest that Ibn Saud's triumphant assertion of power in his recent struggle with the Yemen has not altogether overawed certain disaffected elements within his own country.

2. Discontent is said to exist in the Jauf and Teima areas and forces are being sent there to stabilise the situation. My Indian vice-consul has just returned from a visit of several weeks to Medina and reports that recruiting is being unobtrusively carried on in the town, the troops being destined for service in those northern districts. That there was trouble, of an undefined nature, in respect of three tribes in the north, whose names, however, were not specified, I gathered a few days ago indirectly from a subordinate in the Governorate here.

3. These reports lend interesting corroboration to the information which has recently been appearing in the Royal Air Force Monthly Intelligence Summaries for Palestine and Transjordan, of which the most recent example is contained in paragraph 261 of the summary for August 1934.

4. I am sending copies of this despatch to the Acting High Commissioner for Transjordan, Jerusalem, and to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Bagdad.

I have, &amp;c.

A. S. CALVERT.

[E 6352/5072/25]

No. 29.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received October 15.)*

(No. 568.)

Sir,

Bagdad, October 1, 1934.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 187 of the 13th August, the Minister for Foreign Affairs has informed me that during his recent visit to London he was approached by the Saudi Arabian Minister, who, on instructions from Ibn Saud, proposed the conclusion of a Treaty of Alliance between Iraq and Saudi Arabia. He also made suggestions for the conclusion of a commercial agreement and of a convention according to Saudi subjects Iraqi consular protection.

2. Nuri Pasha states that the Saudi Minister in London, accompanied by the Saudi Secretary-General for Foreign Affairs, intends to visit Bagdad about the end of October on the way to Hail, when this matter will be further discussed. His Excellency desired that His Majesty's Government should be informed of what was in contemplation, and assured me that not only would you in due course be consulted, but also he would make it clear to the Saudi representatives that Iraq would not be a party to any alliance contrary to the treaty with Great Britain, or detrimental to the interests of other Arab States.

3. A copy of his despatch is being sent to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Jedda.

I have, &amp;c.

G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

[E 6371/279/91]

No. 30.

*Sir John Simon to Mr. Calvert (Jedda).*

(No. 375.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 18, 1934.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 368 of the 11th October enclosing a copy of a record of a conversation held on the 3rd October with the Saudi Arabian Minister in London regarding the eastern and south-eastern frontiers of Saudi



Arabia, I have to inform you that on the 15th October Sheikh Hafiz Wahba called again at this Department to discuss this subject.

2. He said that he had communicated to his Government the views which had been expressed to him on the occasion of the conversation referred to above and that he had now received King Ibn Saud's reply, which was as follows.

3. King Ibn Saud's claims in South-Eastern Arabia were to the whole of the inland desert as distinct from the more or less settled coastal belt. The King had no desire to encroach on the settled, or even the nomadic, coastal areas, and had always maintained the friendliest relations with the coastal rulers. But the frontier which he proposed, *i.e.*, the limit of the desert as distinct from the coastal belt, had always been the *de facto* boundary, had always been accepted by all the parties directly concerned and had never in fact been questioned. All the nomadic tribes in the desert area had always owed him allegiance and accepted his sovereignty, as was evidenced by the fact that they regularly paid him *zikat* tax. Their allegiance to him had never been disputed. On being asked whether this meant that King Ibn Saud claimed the whole of the Rubal Khali, the Minister explained that King Ibn Saud's claim was not specifically to the Rubal Khali, but to the "desert" generally as distinct from the coastal belt.

4. Sheikh Hafiz Wahba was warned that many of these statements could hardly be accepted by His Majesty's Government. Moreover, a claim of this general nature was likely to lead to a number of special difficulties. So far as the information at present available went, there appeared to be very little in South-Eastern Arabia that was not desert, and indeed barren and uncultivated areas often extended to the coast. It would be necessary, therefore, in the first place to arrive at a satisfactory definition of the term "desert," in the sense in which it was now being used, and this might be a matter of very considerable difficulty.

5. During the general discussion which followed, the Minister emphasised that King Ibn Saud was anxious to settle this question on a reasonable basis. It proved impossible, however, to obtain from him a closer definition of the King's claims. It was suggested to him that King Ibn Saud might at least have given some further indication of the particular tribes over which he claimed overlordship. Mention had, for instance, been made by Fuad Bey Hamza of the Murra tribe, about which it was possible that there might be no very serious difficulty. On the other hand, the Manasir had also been mentioned, and this tribe, it was understood, had long owed a certain allegiance to the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi. The Minister admitted that certain tribes, whose wanderings took them over the desert, might properly belong to the coastal belt, but he did not pursue the matter.

6. Sheikh Hafiz Wahba was told that his communication would have to be considered more fully before anything further could be said to him. It was important, however, that the issue should be narrowed down as far as possible before Sir Andrew Ryan left for Jedda, since otherwise the difficulties of reaching an early agreement—or, indeed, perhaps any agreement at all—by local negotiation were likely to be very greatly increased.

I am, &c.

JOHN SIMON.

[E 6498/75/25]

No. 31.

*Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.—(Received October 22.)*

(No. 300.)

Sir,

Jedda, October 2, 1934.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the Mecca newspaper the *Saut-al-Hijaz* announced in its issue of the 24th September the appointment by Ibn Saud of his Minister of Finance, Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman-al-Hamdan, to be Deputy Minister of Defence, an office he is to occupy in addition to his present one. As you are aware, the Minister of Finance has for some time, and notably during the recent conflict with the Yemen, effectively performed the functions of Minister of War.

2. The same communiqué also announces the appointment of Sayyid Saleh Shata (Personalities Report, No. 85) and Sheikh Khalid Abul Walid-al-Qarqani

(Personalities Report, No. 57) as members of the permanent committee of the Council of Ministers.

3. It is a little curious that no reference to these important appointments should appear in the *Umm-al-Qura*, a newspaper which is generally regarded as the official or semi-official organ of the Saudi Government.

I have, &c.

A. S. CALVERT.

[E 6499/715/25]

No. 32.

*Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.—(Received October 22.)*

(No. 301. Confidential.)

Sir,

Jedda, October 2, 1934.

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith the Jedda report for September 1934.

2. Copies have been distributed as in the list appended to the report for January.

I have, &c.

A. S. CALVERT.

Enclosure in No. 32.

JEDDA REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 1934.

I.—Internal Affairs.

212. Ibn Saud left Taif for Riyadh on the 16th September, and evidently travelled in leisurely fashion, for he arrived at his Nejd capital seven days later. He was accompanied by his son Amir Khalid, his brother Amir Abdullah-bin-Abdurrahman, and his nephew Amir Saud-bin-Saad.

213. Amir Feysal resumed his duties as Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 18th September. Sheikh Yusuf Yasin, who had paid a flying visit to Jedda on the 8th, when he saw His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, left for Riyadh with the King on the 16th. Fuad Hamza has been travelling in Europe, and was expected in London during September.

214. The Amir of Jedda, Sheikh Abdul Aziz-bin-Mu'ammam, towards the end of August, left to join Amir Feysal in Taif. He had not returned to Jedda at the end of September. There have for some time been rumours of his transfer to some other post, but they appear to be unfounded.

215. The Minister of Finance, though not yet completely restored to health (see paragraph 189 of the report for August), was fit enough to leave about the 20th for Nejd. Several days after his departure, the *Saut-al-Hijaz* announced his appointment as Deputy Minister of Defence, a post which Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman is to hold in addition to his present office.

216. The new Deputy Minister of Defence, who has already played the rôle of War Minister in the recent affair with the Imam Yahya, instead of enjoying a period of recline upon his Yemeni laurels, may soon find himself confronted with a troublesome problem nearer home. Reports are widespread and fairly credible that considerable disaffection exists, and has recently been expressing itself in the north-western districts of Jauf and Teima. The loyalty of Abdul Karim-bin-Rumman, the Governor of Teima, has long been suspect, and his attitude towards the central authority is said to have shown increasing truculence recently. Ibn Saud and his advisers are reported to be supremely unperturbed, but, nevertheless, recruiting is stated to be going on unostentatiously in Medina, whilst Transjordan report increased Saudi military forces along their frontier. Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman's own departure into Nejd, either to Riyadh or to the Aneiza, his own tribe, may not be unconnected with these present manifestations of unrest.

217. The foreign community in Jedda was agreeably aroused from its customary summer social lethargy by the appearance at the beginning of September of a Syrian-Venezuelan pearl-fisher, accompanied by a charming lady of Czechoslovakian origin, and a troupe of some seventeen Venezuelan and



Chilean divers. They are here, it is understood, as the result of a five-year pearl-fishing concession granted gratis by Ibn Saud to the Qusaibis, to whom he is still heavily indebted. The Syrian bears a somewhat elusive name, but is believed to answer to that of Selim Sekundar. He is variously represented to be Qusaibi's *chef d'équipe* or his partner. He is believed to intend to make Jedda his base of operations for about three months, and at the end of September was at Yanbu fishing, without success, in northern waters. Later he proposes to try for pearls in the neighbourhood of Jizan.

218. The King has appointed, according to the *Umm-al-Qura* of the 24th September, Seyyid Saleh Shata and Sheikh Khalid Abdul Walid-al-Qarqani to be members of the permanent committee of the Council of Ministers.

219. The appointment of two officials, Mahsim Effendi Husain and Ibrahim Effendi Zare, as directors of the wireless stations at Riyadh and Mecca respectively has also been announced. The new directors were amongst those sent to London in 1930 by the Saudi Government to study wireless telegraphy.

220. The *Umm-al-Qura* reports the gift of an electric lighting plant for the Haram, Mecca, by the Indian philanthropist, Nawab Sir Muhammad Muzammel Ullah Khan.

221. (Reference paragraph 196 of last month's report.) According to the *Umm-al-Qura* of the 14th September, discussions between the Governments of Iraq and Saudi Arabia on the subject of the overland pilgrim route between Najaf and Medina, which had been suspended, have now been resumed. The journal adds that it can be said that "agreement has been achieved," and it is expected that the road will be inspected during the months of October and November. Meanwhile, there are strong rumours that a transport company has been formed to conduct a motor service between Mecca and Medina and Koweit, the persons mentioned as being interested being M. van de Poll, the Dutch Moslem, and Muhammad Sadiq, the King's chauffeur. These reports should be treated with reserve. M. van de Poll, it is understood, was recently refused permission to go to Riyadh at the time of the King's return there.

222. The attitude of the Saudi Government towards the employment of foreign chauffeurs (see paragraph 151 of Jedda report for July 1933) has recently been relaxed. Evidence of this was the publication at the beginning of the month of an official communiqué announcing that chauffeurs would henceforth be engaged irrespective of nationality, but subject to a strict understanding that men so employed would be subject to the orders of the Government to be sent wherever the Government listed. This condition is probably due to the fact that large numbers of Government-employed chauffeurs showed marked reluctance to proceed with their vehicles to the front during the Saudi-Yemen war.

223. The *Umm-al-Qura* has published, in weekly instalments during the month, new narcotic drugs regulations for the control and regulation of the importation, exportation and use of dangerous drugs. In most countries the new order would be virtuous and enlightened; it is perhaps a little wicked to think the Saudis have adopted these measures partly as a stick with which to belabour foreign dispensaries enjoying diplomatic immunity (see paragraph 227 below).

## II.—Frontier Questions and Foreign Relations in Arabia.

224. There have been no echoes here of the tiff between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, recorded in paragraph 201 of last month's report. Sheikh Yusuf Yasin made no reference to the affair at his meeting with His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires on the 8th, and the Iraqi Chargé d'Affaires, Seyyid Kamil-al-Gilani, is still here. This young man, who is not so frequently seen by this Legation as were some of his predecessors, appears to find the society of the French consulate congenial.

225. Under instructions from His Majesty's Government, His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires addressed the Saudi Minister for Foreign Affairs officially on the 13th September to ascertain, on behalf of the Imperial and International Communications Company, whether the Saudi Government would be prepared to enter into detailed discussions with the company with a view to the establishment of a wireless telegraph service between Bahrein and Saudi Arabia. It was understood that the company would propose to work with the Saudi station at Uqair. Amir Feysal lost no time in replying that his Government welcomed

the proposal, and would be ready to discuss it further after they had had the opportunity of studying the question at greater length. They would suggest that the station at Al Hasa be used, instead of Uqair, which was not now in working order.

226. On the 29th, an official of the Minister for Foreign Affairs telephoned from Taif to inform the Legation that Abdul Aziz-bin-Zeyd, the Saudi frontier official in the north, proposed to travel about a week later to Palmyra to attend a conference, and begged that permission be sought from the Transjordan authorities for him to cross their territory. The following day, the Transjordan authorities signified that no difficulties were anticipated. It seems not unlikely that the visit of this Saudi official to Palmyra is connected with the present discontents in the Jauf-Teima areas, referred to in paragraph 216 above.

## III.—Relations with Powers outside Arabia.

227. (Reference paragraphs 53 and 80.) During the month the delicate question of the position of Legation dispensaries has occasioned certain further exchanges. Towards the end of August, the Minister for Foreign Affairs circularised foreign missions to the effect that henceforth customs dues would be levied on medicines other than those imported for the private use of the mission. In accordance with instructions, His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires stated the views of His Majesty's Government, and suggested that conversations, which had taken place earlier in the year between Sir Andrew Ryan and Fuad Hamza and which had been interrupted, should be resumed in London, where Fuad Hamza was due to arrive on a visit during September. Sheikh Yusuf Yasin replied uncompromisingly, but undertook to acquaint his colleague and the Saudi Minister in London with this suggestion. The narcotic drugs regulations (referred to at paragraph 223 above), which envisaged stringent control of the importation, use, &c., of narcotics under Government licence and inspection, though probably unexceptionable in themselves, nevertheless constitute a further attack on the present position of Legation dispensaries, which, of course, are not excluded from their scope.

228. Signor Persico, the Italian Chargé d'Affaires, who went on short leave to Europe in July (see paragraph 176), returned on the 30th September.

## IV.—Miscellaneous.

229. (Reference paragraph 206.) The cable ship *Retriever* was in Jedda Roads twice during the month repairing the Sudan cable, finally leaving on the 24th.

230. Mr. Philby, who was down in Jedda from the 13th-15th September, left Taif for Riyadh about the 16th or 17th. Mr. Twitchell at the end of the month was still at Taif rather disconsolately angling for his concession. It is believed he is thinking of giving it up as a bad job. M. van de Poll, since the way to Riyadh was barred to him, has returned to Medina.

231. Taif is now given over to Government departments and Amir Feysal and Meccan notables. There were several days of horse-racing before the King left for Riyadh, with handsome sums in prizes. These glories have now vanished with the Court, and in a few weeks even the Government administrations will be packing up and returning to Mecca.

232. The position as regards the manumission of slaves during the month of September was as follows:—

On hand at the beginning of the month: 2 males.  
Took refuge in September: 1 male, 1 female.  
Manumitted in September and repatriated: 1 male.  
Locally manumitted: 1 male, 1 female.  
Left Legation voluntarily: 1 male.  
On hand at the end of the month: Nil.

233. The case referred to in paragraph 211 of last month's report, which threatened to become troublesome, was settled by the disappearance of the man, who left the Legation premises of his own free will and without the knowledge of any member of the staff.



[E 6697/6697/25]

No. 33.

*Consul Mackereth to Sir John Simon.—(Received November 2.)*

(No. 57.)

Sir,

*Damascus, October 25, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to enclose a translation of a report published on the 23rd October, 1934, of an interview given by Fuad Bey Hamza, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs to King Abdul Aziz-bin-Saud, to the reporter of the *Ayyam*.

2. I am sending a copy of this despatch and its enclosure to His Majesty's Minister in Jedda.

I have, &amp;c.

GILBERT MACKERETH.

Enclosure in No. 33.

*Extract from the Ayyam of October 23, 1934.*

CONVERSATION BETWEEN OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT AND FUAD BEY HAMZA.

Q. WILL your Excellency tell me in detail what was the aim in present circumstances of your visit to the European capitals?

A. I went to Europe on a private visit to take a rest, but I also took the opportunity of meeting the men of Italy, France and Great Britain, of discussing with them questions of interest to His Majesty King Abdul Aziz, and of solving some of the outstanding problems. I visited Italy and met Signor Mussolini. This visit served to confirm the good relations existing between the Italian and Arabian Governments. I visited the French capital and met the men of its Government and spoke to that experienced politician, the late M. Barthou, whose death was a great loss to the French nation. He was an energetic man, and he wisely steered French policy in the stormy sea of politics. I visited the English capital and met the Hon. Sir John Simon, the Foreign Minister, and other men of the British Government. I am glad to be able to declare that we succeeded in overcoming many difficulties and in coming to an understanding about many questions which are of interest to the Arab Saudi and the British Governments.

Q. Hejaz being one of the Governments that inaugurated the League of Nations, is it the intention of His Majesty to use that right, having neglected so far to claim it?

A. Hejaz, which was one of the Governments which founded the League of Nations, was then an independent country by itself. Now it is not.

Q. But the Government of His Majesty Abdul Aziz has inherited the Hejaz Kingdom!

A. If we had inherited that, we should have inherited also some other things which are not in our interest. So is it better not to have inherited anything.

Q. Then is it not the intention of the Government of His Majesty to enter the League of Nations?

A. It is possible that this question is now under discussion.

Q. What about the negotiations concerning the Hejaz Railway?

A. Negotiations on that subject are taking place between the Arabian, French and English Governments. Probably a conference will be held shortly to take a final decision about this railway.

Q. Is it not to the interest of Hejaz, Syria and the Moslem world to have the line between Maan and Medina repaired and put into action, and leave other questions to be discussed later?

A. Among other questions considered during the negotiations, which took place a long time ago, was the repairing of the line between Maan and Medina. One of the subjects to be discussed by the conference is the way for securing the necessary funds for repairing this part of the line.

[E 6725/22/91]

No. 34.

*Colonial Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 5.)*

Sir,

*Downing Street, November 3, 1934.*

WITH reference to the letter from this Department of the 20th September, I am directed by Secretary Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister to transmit to you, for the information of Secretary Sir John Simon, a copy of a despatch from the Resident at Aden, enclosing a report by Lieutenant-Colonel M. C. Lake on his recent visit to the Yemen for the exchange of the instruments of ratification of the Treaty of Sanaa.

2. Copies of the Resident's despatch and of the report are being sent to the other Departments concerned.

I am, &amp;c.

H. R. COWELL.

Enclosure in No. 34.

*The Resident, Aden, to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.*

(Secret.)

Sir,

*The Residency, Aden, October 3, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to forward as an enclosure with this despatch Lieutenant-Colonel M. C. Lake's report on his recent visit to Sanaa for the exchange of ratifications of the Treaty of Sanaa.

2. I wish to record my thanks to Group Captain C. F. A. Portal, D.S.O., M.C., the Officer Commanding British Forces in Aden, for his assistance in lending to the mission the services of a medical officer and two Arab orderlies, and also to the Commander-in-chief, Mediterranean, and to Captain the Hon. C. Hermon-Hodge, D.S.C., R.N., for their assistance in conveying the mission from Aden to Hodeida in H.M.S. *Hastings*.

I have, &amp;c.

B. R. REILLY, Resident, &amp;c.

*Political Secretary, Aden, to the Resident and Commander-in-Chief, Aden.*

(Secret.)

Sir,

*The Residency, Aden, October 3, 1934.*

I have the honour to submit my report on the mission to the King of the Yemen for the purpose of the exchange of ratification of treaty documents.

I have, &amp;c.

M. C. LAKE, Political Secretary.

*Report on the Mission to the King of the Yemen for the Purpose of the Exchange of Ratification of Treaty Documents.*

(Secret.)

1. The composition of the mission was as follows:—

Lieutenant-Colonel M. C. Lake (Political Secretary).

Wing Commander R. H. Knowles, R.A.F. (Principal Medical Officer, British Forces, Aden).

Mr. Salih Jafar (Interpreter and Clerk).

Two orderlies from the Aden Protectorate Levies.

*Attached.*

Lieutenant G. M. T. Morphew, R.A.

2. The mission left Aden in H.M.S. *Hastings* (Captain the Hon. C. Hermon-Hodge, D.S.C.) on the 30th August, 1934, and arrived at Hodeida at 2 P.M. on the 31st August. Mr. Salih Jafar, who is political clerk at Hodeida, joined the mission here, and arrived on board to report soon after the ship anchored. His report that the King had given orders that the mission was to receive the same



reception everywhere as that given to Sir Bernard Reilly's mission was not only unexpected, but disturbing, in view of the fact that insufficient funds had been brought to live up to the reception.

He was followed closely by Qadhi Ali-al-Amri, brother of the Prime Minister and secretary to the Governor of Hodeida, the new port officer, Muhsin Galala, late barber to the King of Yemen, and Abdullah Uthman, Amil of Zeidiya, who arrived on board to call and to extend a welcome to the mission.

3. Shortly after they had returned to the shore the mission, accompanied by Captain Hermon-Hodge, landed, the landing being somewhat precarious owing to the dilapidated condition of the swinging iron steps leading from the sea to the jetty. After being welcomed on the jetty by the officer commanding the forces and other officials, the mission proceeded past drawn-up troops and interested spectators to the Government Court House, which had been reserved for our use, and were received there by Seiyid Abdullah-bin-al-Wazir, the Governor, who gave us a warm welcome. Accompanied by Lieutenant Morphew and Mr. Salih Jafar, I returned the Governor's call at 5 p.m. I found with the Governor Sharif Abdullah-ad-Dumein, a charming old gentleman who had commanded the Imam's forces in the Yemen advance against Marib and Al Joba in 1930. The heat in Hodeida was intense. Qadhi Ali sat down to dinner with us, and the band played during dinner.

4. Early the next day, after a sticky night, and one not entirely free from mosquitoes, we proceeded by cars on the first stage of the journey to Sanaa. Our destination that night was Mabbar (*vide* Sir Bernard Reilly's report), but owing to mishaps *en route*, we were unable to reach there by nightfall and bivouacked on the motor track not far from Madinat Al Abid. Qadhi Ali came with us to Sanaa. The country after leaving Ubal, as far as the summit of the Masna Pass, was magnificent, and, green and fresh after the rains, with a profusion of standing crops and running streams, was at its best, while the grandeur of the flanking mountains, verdant and wooded, added to the beauty of the scene.

5. The next day, the 1st September, we reached Mabbar at about 11.30 a.m., and were hospitably entertained by the Amil of the District, Seyid Ahmed-al-Jirafi. His headquarters are at Dhoran, under the pinnacle summit of Jebal Dhoran (10,000 feet), a landmark from the Dhamar plain, and he had come over to Mabbar especially to receive us, having had everything ready for our comfort the previous night. I expressed an apology as best I could for the inconvenience caused him by our delayed arrival. After a hasty change from our travelling clothes to clothes more in keeping with our anticipated reception in Sanaa, we left Mabbar in our cars at about 1.30 p.m. for the last stage of three and a half to four hours. The Amil accompanied us. About 2 miles out of Sanaa we were met by a party of cavalry, who accompanied us from here onwards. After entering the walls of the city by the gate called "Bab-as-Sabah," we alighted from our cars, and I was met by the officer commanding the troops drawn up to receive us, who were lining the route from the gate to our residence, the Turkish court-house, called "As Sanaya," where the Clayton Mission was lodged and also that of Sir Bernard Reilly.

On arrival we were welcomed by the Prime Minister, Qadhi Abdullah-al-Amri, and the Foreign Minister, Qadhi Muhammad Raghīb Bey. Tea and coffee were served, while the band discoursed sweet music outside, the pieces played ranging from a tune which one or two of us recognised as the old familiar refrain of "Pop goes the Weasel!" to the British and Yemeni National Anthems. Unfortunately, none of us knew the latter, and only one of us recognised the former, so we failed to honour them by standing up.

6. The next day, the 3rd September, Qadhi Raghīb paid me a call to discuss our first audience with the King. I had suggested that this should be in the nature of a visit to pay our respects on arrival, and that the more ceremonious visit for the exchange of the ratification documents should take place subsequently. But the Qadhi explained that it was the King of the Yemen's wish that, as I was the bearer of a document containing the signature of the King of Great Britain, the first visit should be for the purpose of handing over this document. Also, the King of the Yemen was residing at present at Ar Rodha, the grape-garden city 5 miles outside Sanaa, and preferred not to have to come in to Sanaa and have the troops turned out twice.

7. On the 4th September, at about 10 a.m., I proceeded to the palace, accompanied by Wing-Commander Knowles, Lieutenant Morphew, Mr. Salih

Jafar, and the two Arab orderlies. All except Mr. Salih Jafar were in uniform. The streets were lined with troops and interested spectators. Qadhi Raghīb met us at the door of the palace and conducted us along the corridor to the audience chamber at its end. We had arranged to get there early in order to compare carefully the two Arabic copies of the treaty, and especially the two Arabic versions of the ratification clause. The exact wording of His Majesty's ratification was necessarily not followed by the King of the Yemen, as he has his own form of ratification similar to that which he has used in ratifying treaties with other foreign Powers. But it was necessary to ensure that the main points contained in His Majesty's ratification, of which there were three, should be contained in that of the King of the Yemen.

8. The King gave me a very cordial welcome, after which Wing-Commander Knowles and Lieutenant Morphew were presented. The ratification documents were then exchanged without any loss of time while the King was still standing and before he had sat down at his dais. I presented His Majesty's document first, opening the document at His Majesty's signature and the Royal Seal, showed it to the King and then, closing it again, replaced it in its case which I gave to His Majesty. After which, the King presented to me his document in a similar manner. He then sat down at his dais and I made a short speech to the King, a copy of which is attached. Towards the end of my speech, Lieutenant Morphew had taken His Majesty's gift of a sword from its case, and on its conclusion, he handed it to me with the sword half-drawn and the Arabic inscription facing the King, and I presented it, the King standing up to receive it. The King was then graciously pleased to reply to my speech, after which he took his departure. The King was evidently very pleased with His Majesty's gift and particularly with the Arabic inscription on it. The King, in his reply, dwelt on his pleasure that the treaty was finally concluded and expressed a hope that it would lead to the better co-operation between the two Governments. He also expressed his gratitude to Sir Bernard Reilly for having taken so much pains to bring it about.

The King appeared to be in good health and good spirits, but it seems that the report of his recent serious illness was not exaggerated.

9. On Wednesday, the 5th September, Qadhi Raghīb Bey came round to our residence, and he and I spent all the morning discussing certain matters.

In this report, I will only mention those which are the direct concern of His Majesty's Government, and deal with the others which have a more local connexion in the form of a short note in their respective Residency files.

10. Qadhi Raghīb opened the proceedings at some length and the gist of his talk was an apology for the Yemen Government, which he described as a young child not yet grown up, and the inefficiency of certain local governors on the frontier, who were holding their posts for the reason that there were, at present, no better people to replace them.

11. Questions discussed were:—

- (1) The best means for improved communication between Aden and Sanaa, viz., by wireless, as directed in Colonial Office despatch of the 9th August, 1934.
- (2) Facilities for the purchase by the King of munitions from His Majesty's Government or British firms should he so desire it (Colonial Office despatch of the 20th November, 1933).
- (3) The appointment by the King of a frontier officer.
- (4) The increase of the export tax on goods exported from Hodeida by foreigners from 10 per cent. to 20 per cent.

12. With regard to (1), I explained to the Qadhi how the Resident had recently represented to His Majesty's Government the King's desire for the establishment of a link between the telegraphic systems of the Yemeni Government and the Eastern Telegraph Company and had recommended a modification of the Company's terms. I went on to inform the Qadhi of His Majesty's Government's reply as contained in the above-mentioned despatch, and that, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, the best method for establishing communication with the Yemen will probably be by wireless from Aden should Messrs. Cable and Wireless (Limited) establish a station there.

The Qadhi replied that he did not think the King would agree to this for fear of offending the Italian Government, and that what the King would prefer would



be for His Majesty's Government to link up the telegraph system of Aden with the telegraph land-line at Taiz, which would be extended to the frontier.

I pointed out certain objections to this from the point of view of His Majesty's Government, chief of which was one of finance, though the Qadhi gave me to understand that the King would be willing to lay the connexion to Aden himself and pay for it if permitted by His Majesty's Government to do so.

I was rather surprised at this fear of offending Italian susceptibilities and in considering the matter later on in the day I thought, perhaps, that I had not made myself quite clear and that the Qadhi had thought that it was intended to erect a W/T station in Aden solely for use with Sanaa. So I sent off Mr. Salih Jafar to Qadhi Raghīb to make clear to the latter that it was probable that a W/T station would be erected in any case by Cable and Wireless (Limited), and that it would be available for communication with Sanaa. However, the same reply was given which was subsequently confirmed by the King.

13. With regard to (2), in accordance with the instructions contained in Colonial Office secret despatch dated the 20th November, 1933, I made it clear to Qadhi Raghīb that the King was at liberty to purchase munitions through His Majesty's Government or British firms should he so desire. The Qadhi expressed thanks on behalf of the King.

14. With regard to (3), I told the Qadhi that, acting on his own suggestion to Sir Bernard Reilly, His Majesty's Government had now appointed a special frontier officer, and that the officer had actually arrived in Aden the previous Saturday. I added that I hoped that the King would appoint one also. The Qadhi replied that the King certainly intended to do so and was looking out for a good man, but that in the meantime he would appoint someone temporarily. At the mission's farewell audience with the King, His Majesty announced that he had appointed the present "Amil of Rada," Seiyid Muhammad-ash-Shami, who, he said, was a man to be trusted, straightforward and unbiassed. Both Qadhi Raghīb and Seiyid Ali-bin-al-Wazir, Governor of Taiz, also spoke highly of him. I understand that his appointment is a permanent one and that someone else will succeed him as Amil.

15. I mentioned (4) rather tentatively to the Qadhi, but Mr. Salih Jafar had already told me that the latter did not approve of the increased export tax and had agreed that its imposition would affect adversely not only foreign trade but Yemen trade also. He told Mr. Salih Jafar that he thought the King had been ill-advised in this matter. I introduced the subject by telling Qadhi Raghīb that certain European business men, having heard that I was going up to Sanaa, had asked me to do what I could in the way of getting the tax reverted to its normal rate, which was not strictly true, but I had spoken to M. Ries at Aden and Mr. Day at Hodeida on the subject, so as to get some idea from them as to how far it affected their trade. It was obvious, too, that such an imposition was not going to benefit Yemeni merchants as I pointed out to the Qadhi. The result was that the King sent a telegraphic order to Hodeida that evening cancelling the increased tax, and I received a note from Qadhi Raghīb the next morning saying that this had been done.

16. Our conversations that morning had been interrupted by the Amil of Sanaa, Seiyid Husein Abdulqadir, and the Commander-in-chief, Seiyid Ali-bin-Ibrahim, calling on me without previous warning. The former I had met at Hodeida in January 1926 while with the Clayton Mission.

I returned their calls on the Friday morning, the 7th September, taking with me Mr. Salih Jafar. I found both of them delightful personalities, well-read and conversant with recent world events and world politics.

17. On Thursday morning, the 6th September, I called first on Qadhi Abdullah-al-Amri, the Prime Minister, and then on Qadhi Raghīb, and during the visit I handed each of them the gold watch which had been presented to them by His Majesty King George V. They were both very pleased with the gift and expressed their thanks. I was accompanied by the two other officers and Mr. Salih Jafar.

18. On Saturday afternoon at 3 p.m. the mission proceeded by car to Ar Rodha, accompanied by Qadhi Raghīb, to have a farewell audience with the King. The visit was informal.

On the King entering the audience chamber, and immediately after the usual compliments, the King described his ailments to Wing-Commander Knowles in some detail and asked for his advice. The Egyptian doctor, Mr. Hafiz Amin,

had previously called on Wing-Commander Knowles and was known to be in attendance on the King and his family. Wing-Commander Knowles was, therefore, placed in rather an awkward position but evaded the difficulty by promising to hold a consultation with Dr. Hafiz, which he subsequently did.

19. The King mentioned certain villages in the reoccupied Audhali territory about the possession of which there was some doubt, the Amil of Beidha claiming them as belonging formerly to the Beidha Sultanate and the Audhali Sultan claiming them as his. They were finally left in Audhali territory, but Sir Bernard Reilly had promised an investigation on his return to Aden, which was duly carried out by himself. The King asked me the result of my investigations, and while admitting that I had not been able to hear the Rasasi (Beidha Sultanate) side of the question, I told the King that from enquiries I had made on the spot and the perusal of certain documents, I was satisfied that the villages and territory under dispute properly belonged to the Audhali Sultan, but that I considered that further investigations were necessary.

The King admitted that he was not conversant with tribal affairs, and paid me the compliment of saying that I, on the other hand, was, and that he would abide by any decision which was passed by the Residency. With a smile, he said that he appointed me his agent in that particular matter, having already, I believe, paid the same compliment to Sir Bernard Reilly.

I had already gone through in some detail with Qadhi Raghīb the territorial aspect of the question, and had explained the impracticability of the Ahl Ali-am-Muhammad, the tribe whose territory is under discussion, being acknowledged as Yemeni, even were their rights to be so proved, as their lands extended on either side of the plateau, and would be as the blade of a sword dividing Audhali territory on the plateau into two halves.

20. Before the King left the audience chamber, I thanked His Majesty for the hospitality and welcome he had extended to the mission.

21. On Sunday, the 9th September, a week after arriving at Sanaa, we left to return to Aden overland via Yarim, Ibb and Taiz. In any case, I considered a few days' visit to Taiz to be of advantage, as there were a good many local matters to be discussed with the Governor. It had been suggested to us, and we ourselves had considered the suggestion, that we should reach Taiz via Hodeida (along the road we had come), and from Hodeida through the Tihama by Zabid and Beit-al-Faqih to Mocha, and so to Taiz. By this route we could have reached Taiz all the way by car. But the prospect of being bumped through the Tihama from Hodeida, along a flat, dusty, possibly uninteresting road, to Mocha, in the dampest and hottest month of the year was not pleasing, so we preferred the more direct route, especially as it would be new ground to the other two officers, and, in spite of 40 miles of the route being impossible for cars, would take no longer.

22. We left Sanaa at 7 a.m., Qadhi Raghīb seeing us off, and the Turkish officer in charge of our guard, Seiyid Muhammad Halabi Effendi, accompanying us to the frontier. Troops were lining the road outside the Bab-as-Sabah, and as we passed the artillery barracks two batteries were drawn up, one on either side of the road. Our outriders, who had always accompanied our car in drives through the city, now came with us for a distance of about 2 miles outside the walls, where they took leave.

Our destination for that night was Yarim, which we reached about 4 p.m. I found the road from Mabār to Yarim considerably improved since I had motored along it in January 1932. The portion from Mabār to Sanaa now makes a wide easterly detour, thus avoiding the difficult but direct route over the Yaslin Pass (9,500 feet), and then via Walan, which was the route used by my car on my last journey.

Yarim is a squalid, dirty town, which had been rendered no cleaner by recent rain. The small garrison was drawn up to receive us in front of our somewhat cramped quarters, but before reaching there we had to pass through narrow streets swarming with an interested crowd. At about 5 p.m. the Amil, Seiyid Hashim, came to call, and I returned the call just before sunset.

23. We left early the next morning, doing by car the remaining 8 miles or so to motor terminus at Qaa-al-Haql, at the foot of the northern side of the Sumara Pass. It was the worst bit of road we had yet encountered, but we got there somehow without damage.

The country round Yarim, which is over 8,000 feet in altitude, was grand, especially on the evening of our arrival, when there was a violent thunderstorm



raging round the mountain tops. It gave us an insight into the type of country, and the verdure, we were still to meet.

24. At the motor terminus we found our riding and baggage mules, with the escort of soldiers and muleteers, awaiting us, and while we had breakfast the mules were loaded up. We started off on our trek over the mountains to our next motor terminus at Sayani, at 9.15 A.M. The Sumara Pass is 9,600 feet in altitude, and its summit is the dividing line between the Zeidi and Shafai populations, and the Wadi Mahfidh, which is the valley on the Aden side, must be one of the prettiest spots in Al Yemen. We reached Makhadar, which was our halting place for the night, at 4 P.M. The actual going from where we left the cars was three and three-quarter hours' walking and four and three-quarters on the riding mules. By spending the first night in bivouac at Qaa-al-Haql (motor terminus) one could make Ibb instead of Makhadar on the second day, but the King would not hear of us bivouacking in the open rather than accepting the hospitality of Yarim, and so we arranged to do the journey to Taiz in four stages instead of three, and to have an easy one between Makhadar and Ibb, which would get us to Ibb early and give us time to see that interesting town.

At Makhadar the usual calls were exchanged between the Amil (Ahmed Salih-as-Sabari) and myself. Almost immediately after we arrived it started to rain, and some of our kit, which was behind us, got wet.

25. The next day we proceeded down the beautiful Wadi Suhul to Ibb. On all sides there was a scene of verdure and freshness, and such a profusion of crops as one seldom sees. The mountain slopes were green and wooded, and the country lanes through which we passed were flanked with hedges profuse in ferns and flowery creepers, their grassy banks a carpet of wild flowers. The crimson flowering cactus with which the undulations were covered added a brilliant touch of colour to the scene. On our left, cascading down the slopes of Jebal Badan, were one or two waterfalls, and the actual river bed of Wadi Suhul, with its water rippling over the boulders, resembled a Scotch mountain burn. Yemen in winter, the only season at which I had visited it previously, is striking enough, but Yemen in the early autumn, after the rains, has to be seen to be believed. One hardly expects to find such a paradise in the sterile Arabia of popular imagination, and certainly not within 100 miles of the barren rocks of Aden.

We reached the foot of the ascent leading up to the town of Ibb soon after 12.30 P.M. In actual going, it is just over three hours' walking from Makhadar and three and a half hours on riding mules at a walk. Just before we reached the foot the rain, which had been threatening, came down.

26. Drawn up to receive us, mounted on horses and mules, were the leading notables of the town, headed by Seiyid Yahya-bin-Hasan-al-Warit, a pleasant, cheery fellow of middle age, the son of the chief magistrate. Beyond them was a line of troops, complete with band and buglers, and a fairly large concourse of townspeople. I saluted the row of notables as I passed and then dismounted to greet Seiyid Yahya, who did the same, after which we both mounted again, and after inspecting the troops we all commenced the ascent of the hill leading up to the town. There was also present Seiyid Abbas, the son of the Governor, aged about 6, a diminutive figure on a large horse, robed in gorgeous apparel.

It took us forty minutes to reach the top, the road being for the most part paved with slabs of stone, as are most of these ancient ascents in the Yemen and the Protectorate. The slabs were very slippery after the rain, and the mules had difficulty in keeping their feet and making the ascent. I, personally, felt very insecure and would far rather have made the climb on foot. The going was made more difficult by the jostling crowd, mounted and dismounted, but who were all very friendly and in high spirits.

The actual town of Ibb is reached after five minutes from the top, and here most of the town seemed to have turned out to view our arrival, and the housetops were crowded.

We did not enter the town, but went past it up a slight incline, on the top of which is the old Turkish barracks and hospital. Seif-al-Islam Hasan, one of the King's sons, turned the barracks into a residence a few years ago, and guests are usually lodged there now, as I myself was two and a half years ago.

From here one looks down on the town a few hundred yards distant. But it did not look the same Ibb as I had known it in January 1932 and January 1926. Then, with its whitewashed, seemingly many-storied houses, it looked like an iced-cake nestling under the towering slopes of Jebal Badan, or, as Mr. Amin Reihani more poetically describes it, "like a pearl surrounded by emeralds."

Now the rains had removed all the whitewash, leaving dirty streaks on the outside. But though the outside appearance of the town had deteriorated, I found later that the inside, with its cobbled narrow streets, picturesque archways and tall houses, remained as attractive as ever, like some mediæval village in Southern France, and still one of the cleanest places in the Yemen. A truly fascinating town in a gorgeous setting.

27. After lunch, the Governor, Seiyid Yahya-bin-Abbas, a nervous weak-looking man, who used to be posted at Qataba, came to call, accompanied by his small son, Abbas, Seiyid Yahya-bin-Hasan, the chief magistrate's son, and one or two other notables. Conversation was rather difficult, though the Governor was very friendly.

I returned the call later on in the afternoon, accompanied by Lieutenant Morphew, after which we were shown the town and its bazaars, and were taken to see the famous old aqueduct which brings an unfailing supply of water from Jebal Badan to the town. As the Governor had hinted to Mr. Salih Jafar that we should call on the chief magistrate, we did so before returning to our quarters, although it was already sunset. We got a most effusive welcome from both father and son. I found that I had met before the son, Seiyid Yahya (whom I have already mentioned above), while he was Amil of Mabar in 1926.

28. We left Ibb the next morning, the 12th September, and arrived at Sayani, the motor terminus for Taiz, at 12.45 P.M., travelling over the Muharras Pass down to Wadi Nakhlan. The actual going was three and a half hours on foot and four and a half hours on mules. Awaiting us at Sayani was Seiyid Muhammad-az-Zabara, who used to be the Yemeni representative in Cairo. I had last seen him at the Residency office just before leaving for Sanaa, when he intended to go to Cairo. But, hearing of the serious illness of the King, he had postponed the journey and had hastened towards Sanaa, cutting short his journey at Taiz on news of His Majesty's recovery. With him were three touring cars and a bus for our baggage. He had a tent ready pitched for our reception, with lunch laid out in it.

29. The road from Sayani to Taiz was the best which we had yet been over and I, personally, was amazed at the improvement effected since my last journey along it in January 1932. It was evident, too, that a lot of work had been put into it quite recently. We had a comfortable, smooth drive of over 40 miles which we did in about two hours, arriving at Taiz at 4 as we had arranged. There was the usual display of troops, with the band. One can always rely on being made very comfortable at Taiz, and this time was no exception. Seiyid Ali's house at the barracks, about three-quarters of a mile outside the town, was put at our disposal. It was here that the lady doctor and nurses were quartered when the medical mission to Taiz was despatched in January 1932 to attend His Majesty's grand-daughter. Unfortunately, our arrival was marred by the news of the death of one of the sons of Seiyid that morning. He was aged 7 and died of tuberculosis. Consequently Seiyid Ali did not come up and give us an informal welcome as he would otherwise have done, but after tea I went across, accompanied by Lieutenant Morphew, to visit him and offer him our condolences.

30. The next morning, the 13th September, Seiyid Ali came up to the ante-room to see us and brought with him the Amil of Taiz, Seiyid Ahmed-bin-Ali, an old friend of mine and brother of Seiyid Abduljalil, Governor of Mocha.

We returned the Amil's call in the town of Taiz at 11, and he showed us round his garden. We then went on to return the call of the Italian doctor, Dr. Bertroni, who had visited us on our arrival.

31. The extreme friendliness of the officials and Shafai population at Ibb and Taiz was most noticeable. The whole atmosphere was much more companionable than in the more northern Yemen towns in the Zeidi area. Heartily a welcome as we were given in Sanaa, the usual aloofness of the minor officials and general population was still noticeable. The reason for this stand-offishness is the prohibition by the King against visitors to His Majesty's guests or allowing anyone to entertain or receive a visit from his guests without His Majesty's permission. Neither is anyone, even though he may be a former acquaintance, permitted to hold conversation with His Majesty's guests should he meet them in the streets. On the other hand, it was definitely noticeable how many more people greeted one with a salute in passing. However much the attitude of friendliness at Sanaa may increase, the attitude of suspicion, handed down by Sanaa's lord and master, will die hard.



32. Seiyid Ali and the Italian doctor joined us at lunch that day, and after lunch Seiyid Ali and I, with Mr. Salih Jafar, discussed questions of local interest in connexion with border and tribal differences and the passage of motor traffic by the new road between Aden and Taiz.

33. On the evening of Friday, the 14th September, Seiyid Ali came up to the ante-room to say good-bye, as we were leaving early the next day.

We had received the usual hospitality and comfort which one has learnt to associate with Taiz and its broadminded and friendly Governor. The country round was looking its best, in spite of the rains that year having failed to a certain extent. A car was put at our disposal and also horses to ride.

34. We left Taiz at 6.30 the next morning, the 15th September, in three touring cars and a bus for our baggage. The route leads, to begin with, along the Mawiya road and turns off right-handed just before Al Janad. It describes a big detour to the north-east-east and south-west and if a more direct route could be found through the low foot-hills east of Jebal Sabar about 20 miles would be saved in distance, though not much would be saved in actual time unless the Governor of Taiz was prepared to construct a really well-made road at great labour and expense, as the present route avoids physical difficulties, with the result that motor traffic can proceed along it with average speed. I tentatively suggested to Seiyid Ali, who had told me that various alternative routes had been reconnoitred and found unsuitable, that a reconnaissance from the air made by an engineer would be the best means of discovering the most suitable route, and if he would like us to assist him in this I would tell the Resident. He replied that, at present, he knew that the King would not agree to machines flying over Yemen territory for any purpose, but perhaps later on he might, and I expressed a hope that he would let us know if he wanted our assistance and we should be only too pleased to give it if possible, for which he thanked me.

But it was evident that Seiyid Ali had already been put to considerable expense over the construction of the present route, and, such being the case, it is unlikely that he will wish to construct a new one.

35. We reached the frontier (53 miles) in just under four hours' actual going, but could have done it comfortably in three and a half if our driver had not dawdled at the start.

At the frontier we found Captain Seager, the frontier officer, and we transferred into the cars which had been sent out from Aden.

It took us another three and a half hours' actual going to reach Lahej, which is 47 miles from the frontier, and we reached Aden, where our party broke up, at 4.30 p.m.

The mission met with a very cordial reception everywhere.

36. The change of attitude of the Yemeni officials and their broader outlook on life generally was very noticeable in contrast to their bearing at the time of the Clayton Mission and when I visited Sanaa in January 1932. They seemed to realise that there were other countries in the world besides the Yemen, and that the Yemen is only a very small portion of the universe, and very backward. Instead of a constant attitude of suspicion of foreign interference and a desire to live in a world of their own, desire for progress has arisen and the realisation that such progress cannot be attained without outside help. In this respect, there appeared to be a very genuine sense of relief that the treaty with Great Britain had been successfully concluded, and a genuine wish that Great Britain should be the Power to whom the Yemen Government should turn to assist her.

I made a point, at every opportunity, of assuring the King, and others, of His Majesty's Government's willingness and desire to assist the Yemeni Government to the best of its ability.

The Foreign Minister's apologies to me for the inefficiency of the Yemen Government, as it is at present, and for the ineptitude and, in some cases, local-mindedness of the King's Governors and Amils, indicated a realisation of the country's failings and weakness. But though these failings are apparent to all thinking Yemeni officials and the desire to eliminate them is sincere, any attempt to do so must be gradual as long as the present autocratic ruler, whose suspicion of Government reform and whose conservatism are still factors with which to reckon, is alive.

37. A very noticeable feature of the King's policy is his fear of permitting anything which might offend Italian susceptibilities. In this he is probably

influenced by his treaty with the Italian Government, which was the first treaty ever made with a European foreign Power, and by his consequent disinclination to grant any concession or to approve any suggestion put forward by another foreign Power which he would not be willing to grant to Italy. As instances of this are Sir Bernard Reilly's tentative broaching to Qadhi Raghib of the subject of constructing a landing ground at Sanaa (*vide* Sir Bernard Reilly's report), my own mention of the same subject in January 1932 with regard to a landing ground near Taiz, desired by Seiyid Ali, the Governor, the King's refusal to allow a Political Officer to be stationed at Sanaa on behalf of His Majesty's Government (though were it not for thoughts of Italy he would probably welcome one), his present objection to the proposal of His Majesty's Government that direct W/T communication should be established between Aden and Sanaa (*vide supra*), and his protests should any aircraft transgress his frontier.

To any such proposals as those mentioned above the reply is usually given that "the present time is not suitable, but that after a year or two it is hoped," &c., and one wonders whether the Imam's treaty with the Italian Government, which expires in September 1936 (or May 1936, if Moslem years are considered), may not influence the reply and that the construction which can be placed on it is that the treaty will probably not be renewed.

38. As regards succession to the Imamate, although the King's eldest son, Seif-al-Islam Ahmed, has been proclaimed Crown Prince and heir apparent, it seems that his ultimate succession is by no means certain. Although he is said to have the strength, he is not popular and his cruelty and tyranny are likely to cause a revulsion of feeling against his rule and a dread of the future when the reins of government are in his hands.

Of the Imam's other sons, Seif-al-Islam Ali is probably the one who would receive the greatest support, as he is very popular. He is nominally "Minister of Finance" in the Yemen "Cabinet," but, I believe, lately got into trouble with his august father for failing in his duties. Report has it that he is fonder of wine and women than trying to balance a budget.

The most favoured opponents of the Crown Prince are the Ibn Al Wazir family, of whom Seiyid Abdullah is the most likely candidate. At present Governor of Hodeida, he has filled many important posts in the past, the most recent one, of course, being the King of the Yemen's representative in the peace negotiations with Ibn Saud. He is a man of strong character and fine presence. As far as one can see, he is on quite good terms at present with the Imam, but the Imam makes a point of sending him to places to do a special job which is likely to make him unpopular with the people. Hence his selection of him temporarily as Governor of the Shafai district of Hodeida, immediately after the Saudi evacuation and Yemeni reoccupation. As is known, the Shafai population of the Tihama proved themselves disloyal during the Saudi advance and Seiyid Abdullah, on assuming his appointment, had orders to deal with the people with a heavy hand. It is rumoured that one of the King's sons is again going to be appointed Governor of Hodeida, and, if true, it will be interesting to see what work the King will find for Seiyid Abdullah.

Even should Seiyid Abdullah not consider himself strong enough to make a bid for the throne, one would not be surprised to find him asserting his independence and proclaiming himself an independent Governor.

Seiyid Ali, the cousin of Seiyid Abdullah, who is Governor of Taiz, is not eligible for the throne owing to the loss of one eye. He seems to be on good terms with the King, but himself expresses the opinion that there will be upheavals and contentions for the throne when the King dies.

Another member of the Al Wazir family is Seiyid Muhammad, Abdullah's brother, who is Governor of the Dhamar district.

A new claimant to the future throne has lately arisen in the person of Seiyid Ali Hamud of Kokaban, of the Qasim branch of the Imam's family, who is reported to have gained considerable popularity.

39. Wing-Commander Knowles treated a good many patients, at Sanaa, Ibb, and Taiz, and I have already reported how his advice was sought by the King.

At Taiz, Seiyid Ali, the Governor, asked his advice about the health of his eldest son, Abdullah, who had been out of sorts for some months with an internal complaint, and the Amil of Taiz consulted him with regard to one of his sons, a boy of about 8. As the Italian doctor, Bertroni, was in charge of the cases,



Wing-Commander Knowles went into consultation with him about them and suggested that both the invalids should be sent to Aden as soon as possible, the Governor's son to be X-rayed and the Amil's son for an operation, and I extended a welcome to them as political guests during their stay in Aden. This was agreed to and it is expected that they will shortly arrive. Lieutenant Morphew, R.A., was granted leave to proceed with the mission, to which he was attached, and my thanks are due to him for the various ways in which he assisted me.

I am also very grateful for the assistance rendered to me by Mr. Salih Jafar, the Residency political clerk at Hodeida. His knowledge of the Yemeni personalities and Yemeni politics was invaluable to me, and I was glad to ask for and receive his advice.

My thanks are also due to Sergeant Nasir Awadh Aulahi and Private Abdulghafur Muhammad Yafai of the Aden Protectorate Levies, who did good work as orderlies.

40. It is regretted that the estimate of the expenses of the mission as submitted to His Majesty's Government in telegram No. 208 of the 6th August, 1934, has been considerably exceeded. The reasons for the increase have already been explained in telegram No. 253 of the 20th September, 1934, and the increase is almost entirely due to the necessity for giving larger and more tips and presents and also to an item which was unforeseen, namely, the hire of motor transport from the Yemen frontier to Aden.

In making out the original estimate, it was not anticipated that the mission would be received on the same scale of reception as that of Sir Bernard Reilly's mission, and consequently provision had not been made for the disbursement of tips and presents except on a moderate scale. It therefore came as something of a shock when I was informed at Hodeida of the King's order (paragraph 2), and I at once realised that I should have to reciprocate this treatment by an increase of tips, and that the recipients also would increase in proportion to the scale of welcome accorded.

As it was, I always went very carefully into the question of disbursements at the end of our visits to our various halting places, and usually in consultation with Mr. Salih Jafar, who had accompanied Sir Bernard Reilly and was able to quote precedents in many cases, and once or twice I cut down his recommendations ruthlessly.

As regards the expenditure of £27 on motor transport, as against £12 which would have been the cost of sea passages from Hodeida to Aden, it has already been explained that this was due to the considered advantage of a visit to Taiz and a talk with the Governor on outstanding local questions. Personal contact is always preferable to correspondence, and it is hoped that the benefit derived from this visit will be considered to have been worth the extra £15 expended.

M. C. L.

Aden, October 1, 1934.

Your Majesty,

With the exchange of these documents of ratification, the Treaty of Sanaa has been finally concluded, Praise be to God, and the bonds of friendship between the two Governments cemented.

On behalf of His Majesty the King of Great Britain, &c., and of His Majesty's Government, I express the hope that this friendship will endure permanently, that nothing will occur in any way to break or weaken it and that both nations may co-operate amicably to settle any question of difference which may possibly arise in the future, to improve communications, to foster mutual acquaintance between officials and others of each country, and to encourage trade.

To mark this auspicious and historic event, I have the honour to present a sword to your Majesty, the gift of His Majesty King George V, in token of his friendship and esteem.

[E 6846/148/25]

No. 35.

Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.—(Received November 12.)

(No. 321.)

Sir,

Jedda, October 23, 1934.

WITH reference to my printed despatch No. 293 E. of the 24th September, relative to the establishment of an overland route for pilgrims between Medina and Nejef, I have the honour to inform you that the *Umm-al-Qura*, on the 19th October, announced that negotiations between the two Governments concerned had made further progress, and that complete agreement on major questions involved was shortly to be expected. Each Government is now to appoint a commission to decide on the alignment of the projected motor road.

2. Elsewhere in the same issue of the *Umm-al-Qura* it is reported that a motor transport company has been formed for the purpose of transporting pilgrims from the Persian Gulf by car to Mecca. This development, which is stated to have been sponsored by the Saudi Government as a result of representations received from "inhabitants of the Persian Gulf," may be not unconnected with the proposals of the Saudi authorities to develop the carriage of mails by car, reported in my despatch No. 319 of the 20th October, as this company is to transport mails as well as passengers. The company, it is stated, intends to commence its operations before Ramadan.

3. I am sending copies of this despatch to the Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Department of Overseas Trade, his Excellency the Viceroy of India (Foreign and Political Department), and His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Bagdad.

I have, &c.

A. S. CALVERT.

[E 6983/715/25]

No. 36.

Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.—(Received November 19.)

(No. 329. Confidential.)

Sir,

Jedda, November 3, 1934.

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith the Jedda Report for October 1934.

2. Copies have been distributed as in the list appended to the report for January.

I have, &c.

A. S. CALVERT.

Enclosure in No. 36.

JEDDA REPORT FOR OCTOBER 1934.

I.—Internal Affairs.

234. Ibn Saud remained at Riyadh during the month, where he is reported to have received congratulatory visits from large numbers of Nejd tribesmen. Such gatherings are usual at this season, and between five and six thousand of his subjects have been enjoying the King's hospitality this year.

235. Amir Feisal is said to have gone distinctly gayer since the departure of Ibn Saud last month. During October he has had little outings from Taif to the Wadi Liya and Ashira. Stories are not lacking that the jealousy which is believed to exist between him and Amir Saud has lately grown more marked. During the late war with the Yemen, the comparative eclipse of the heir apparent in the wilderness of Najran contrasted with the almost floodlit victories of his younger brother in the Tihama. Feisal also is said to be gaining steadily in popularity in the Hejaz. He, the travelled member of the family, is to the Nejd mind in constant contact with the representatives at Jedda of foreign Powers, whereas Saud lives in remote unvisited Riyadh where less scope offers to the practitioner in the sweet uses of publicity. Nejd, too, is poor; the Hejaz, on the



other hand, reaps a varying, but often rich, annual crop of pilgrim dues—it were a sin if these sanctified offerings were to fall, upon the demise of the King, into the hands of other than the eldest son, and particularly into the hands of so insecure a Wahabi Fundamentalist as Feisal. He is now stated to have been summoned to Riyadh—some say he goes to be married—and is believed to be only putting off his departure for a few days in order to meet Muhammad Talaat Pasha Harb (see paragraph 240 (g)).

236. Ibn Saud has retained Sheikh Yusuf Yasin with him in Nejd, but this Minister's hand is to be seen in much of the recent legislation of a nationalist tendency, to which references will be made later in this report. Fuad Bey Hamza has not yet returned from his European journey (see paragraph 253), but Taufiq Hamza recently declared that his brother would be back in the course of the next few weeks. If Amir Feisal goes off on a visit to Riyadh His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires will soon have no one in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to play with.

237. The Amir of Jedda (see paragraph 214 of the report for last month) has remained at Taif in the entourage of Amir Feisal, with whom he is very friendly. Sheikh Ali Taha has officiated here as usual during his absence.

238. Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman (see paragraphs 215 and 216 of last month's report) after spending some time in Aneyzeh travelled from there about the 11th October direct to Medina. He returned to Mecca on the 24th, passing through Jedda, where to those who met him he had much to say about Yanbu, as a potential fruit-growing district, and the Jebel Radhwa, where he had passed three days, but less about his stay in Medina itself. This, if not strange, was disappointing, as his visit to Medina, in some minds, had been associated with the reported unrest in Teima.

239. The situation in that northern district is as indefinable as ever. Rumour is still busy but vague, and seems to feed chiefly on press reports from neighbouring countries. The Saudi authorities still seem unconcerned.

240. The following items of economic or financial interest may be noted:—

- (a) At the end of September the Saudi Government announced their adhesion to the agreements arrived at at the Tenth International Postal Conference, held in Cairo last spring.
- (b) The *Umm-al-Qura* of the 20th October announced the establishment, as from the 15th October, of a fortnightly mail and passenger service by car between Mecca and Riyadh.
- (c) On the 23rd October 6,000 Mauser rifles and three cases of machine guns were landed at Jedda from a Strick boat. They are said to have been consigned from Antwerp and imported by Khalid-al-Qarqani for account of Saudi Government, and are stated to be old and used war-stock, dating from 1916, worth anything from £2 to £3 a rifle. That Khalid-al-Qarqani should have imported this material from an obviously German source gives some weight to reports current that he has joined in partnership with Haji Qasim (formerly ? Machtig), the *ex-départ* clerk (of Balkan origin) of the late German consul here, Herr de Haas. This partnership is locally said to be making a bid for that phoenix concession: the Jedda-Mecca Railway.
- (d) Mr. Twitchell is reported on good authority to have secured his gold-mining concession, and the agreement, it is said, has now been sent to the King for approval and signature. Mr. Twitchell, in the meantime, is still at Taif.
- (e) Mr. C. D. Cowper, the representative of Lever Brothers, arrived by *Khedivial* on the 21st and left by the same boat on the 24th October. He did not call on the Legation and is said to have been more energetic in pushing Lever Brothers' French products than Sunlight soap.
- (f) (Reference paragraph 217 of last month's report.) Nothing further has been heard of the Syrian-Venezuelan pearl fishers. They have not put in an appearance again at Jedda, and it may be presumed are still at work along the coast.
- (g) Preparations for another visit to Jedda by air of Muhammad Talaat Pasha Harb, the Egyptian Senator and chairman of the directors of Banque Misr, are being made for early November (see paragraph 254 of the report for November 1933).

241. The *Umm-al-Qura* in its issues of the 19th and 26th October published the Saudi Government's "Regulations in respect of Landed Property in the Hejaz." These are chiefly remarkable for the declaration that the law obtaining under previous Governments prohibiting foreigners from possessing landed property will be maintained, that all foreigners who may have come into possession of such property must dispose of the same, and that those contravening these regulations will be liable to certain penalties prescribed. The question has been referred by the Legation to His Majesty's Government.

242. (Reference paragraph 221 of last month's report.) There have been further references in the Saudi press during the month to the overland pilgrim route, which suggests that, while agreement between the Governments of Iraq and Saudi Arabia has not yet been reached, further progress in negotiations has been made. A project to bring pilgrims from the Persian Gulf to Mecca is also reported in the press to have been given the approval of the Saudi authorities. It may have some connexion with larger inland transport schemes already mentioned, but of which little fresh has been heard in October.

243. On the 5th October the *Umm-al-Qura* published official "Instructions to Chauffeurs" partly of a technical nature, which it would probably need special police to enforce. They will therefore probably be largely observed in the breach.

244. The reformist urge which is manifesting itself this summer in such various legislation to which paragraphs 153, 194, 195 and 223 in previous reports, as well as foregoing paragraphs in this report, bear witness, was again displayed in the publication during the month of comprehensive regulations against infectious diseases. These regulations are, in themselves, probably blameless and not to be discouraged, but they lack reality in the almost entire absence of reasonably equipped hospitals, clinics, isolation wards, laboratories, X-ray departments with qualified staffs, all of which are implied in the regulations, as well as the money and the knowledge to establish an even modestly ambitious health organisation.

245. The Saudi Government recently announced their adhesion to the International Sanitary Convention of 1926, but with reservations in respect of a number of articles. The first pilgrim ship for the 1935 Haj arrived on the 31st October (see paragraph 258), and no change in established procedure was reported, but the attitude of the Saudi authorities is being watched, and meanwhile the question as to whether this declaration with reservations constitutes a ratification has been referred to His Majesty's Government.

246. A Wapiti plane was flown from Taif to Jedda on the 27th October, and was still here at the end of the month, though it was rumoured it was intended to be used against the malcontents of Teima.

247. The general economic condition of the country is still as grave as last year. Military expenditure has much more than offset increased revenues from last year's pilgrimage; officials during the past six months have received less than one-third of their salaries; trade is stagnant and old stocks unliquidated; mendicancy is increasing, and the food and clothing now being distributed as charity in the name of the King are totally inadequate to alleviate the distress. There are certain hopes, perhaps still premature, of a further increase in the number of pilgrims in 1935—it is to be hoped that such optimism is well founded.

248. The following appointments have appeared in the *Saut-al-Hejaz* during the month:—

Sheikh Ahmad-al-Isa as Amir of Yanbu; Sheikh Mansur-as-Saleh-shahqqa as Amir of Wejh; Sheikh Ibrahim-an-Neshmi as Amir of Turaba; and Sheikh Hasan Ibn Duqaithar as Amir of Ranya.

## II.—Frontier Questions and Foreign Relations in Arabia.

249. (Reference paragraph 226 of last month's report.) Abdul Aziz Ibn Zeyd, the Saudi frontier official, left the Qarriyyat on the 3rd October intending to get into direct touch with his opposite number in Transjordan before crossing the frontier on his way to the Palmyra Conference. The *Umm-al-Qura* later published a short article describing the conference, which was to be attended by representatives of Iraq, Syria and Saudi Arabia, as having been arranged in order to deal with claims of the tribes of those countries in respect of loot.



250. On the 4th October the Saudi Government officially protested against an alleged violation of Saudi territory by two aeroplanes and a number of armed soldiers of the Transjordan Camel Corps at Thaniya Tarif north of Fajr. The note, which affirmed that the place mentioned was within Saudi Arabia, demanded indemnification and that measures be taken to prevent a recurrence of so manifest an aggression. His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires replied on the 13th, under direction, that the Saudi Government probably referred to the presence on the 23rd September at Shaib Thaniyya Tarais of an armoured car and two aircraft in the course of their patrol on the regular Transjordan frontier patrol car track, and pointed out that if so, patrols along this track had been carried out as a matter of routine for the past three years, and that the car track on which Shaib Thaniyya Tarais is situated is not in Saudi Arabia but in Transjordan territory. No further exchange had taken place at the end of the month.

251. A further frontier incident threatened, but in the event passed off happily, about the same time when three Moth civil aeroplanes of the Bombay Flying Club lost their way flying from Bagdad to Basra and landed in the desert near Ansab at the western corner of the Saudi-Iraq Neutral Zone. Royal Air Force machines from Basra and armoured cars were used in prosecuting a vigorous search, which appeared almost certain to result in infraction of the Saudi frontier. The Saudi Government, however, played up extremely well, Amir Feisal, to whom His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires telephoned in the first place, ordering the Amirs of Hail and El Hasa to send cars to help in the search and to render all possible assistance. The lost planes were quickly found and Saudi assistance proved unnecessary. The affair terminated with a polite hope on the part of Amir Feisal that no one was injured and a perfect deluge of thanks from His Majesty's Government, the Government of India, Bagdad and His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires himself.

252. About the 24th October trial wireless telegraph communications were successfully exchanged between Riyadh and Basra. The occasion was officially noticed in an exchange of congratulatory telegrams between Nuri Pasha As Said and Sheikh Yusuf Yasin, couched in unusually warm terms, and referring to their mutual desire for close collaboration, co-operation, &c.

### III.—Relations with Powers outside Arabia.

253. (Reference paragraph 236.) Fuad Bey Hamza, after terminating his visits to London (where he had conversations at the Foreign Office and was received by the Secretary of State), Paris and Rome, was in Istanbul at the beginning of the month, travelling thence to his home in Syria.

254. (Reference paragraph 227.) The question of Legation dispensaries and cognate questions were the subject of a conversation between Sir Andrew Ryan and Fuad Bey Hamza in London and of a further note to the Minister for Foreign Affairs by His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, elucidating certain points and restating the views of His Majesty's Government on others. A reply from Amir Feisal on the 22nd October was uncompromising, and the matter was under further consideration at the end of the month.

255. As the outcome of further consideration which has recently been devoted to questions arising out of the Saudi Nationality Law of 1926 (the text of which is given as an appendix to the Jedda report for January-February 1931), Mr. Calvert addressed Amir Feisal on the 15th October, urging that the period of grace of six months, viz., to 5th February, 1935, now allowed to claimants to foreign nationality in which to prove their status, is insufficient. The opportunity was also taken to acquaint the Saudi Government that, even should British subjects or British-protected persons be unable to produce documents establishing their British status, they would not cease to be regarded by British authorities as British subjects or British-protected persons merely because they had acquired Saudi nationality under article 10 of the Saudi Nationality Law. His Majesty's Government would not, however, claim to afford protection to these persons while they remained on Saudi territory.

256. The *Saut-al-Hejaz*, early in October, published a short paragraph, obviously reproduced from the Egyptian or Palestine press, in which similar notices had already appeared, stating that a Japanese mission is reported to intend paying a visit to this country to select a large number of young men,

between the ages of 20 and 25 years, of a certain education, with a view to sending them to Japan to complete their studies. What appears to be an equally lusty "canard" also emanated from Egypt, that the Japanese Government have appointed a certain Muhammad-al-Saqqaf to be their representative in Saudi Arabia.

257. Celâl Bey, the Turkish Chargé and M. Adriaanse, the Dutch Chargé, returned to Jedda from leave in Europe on the 14th and 28th October respectively.

### IV.—Miscellaneous.

258. The first pilgrim ship to arrive was the steamship *Polyphemus*, bringing on the 31st October 732 pilgrims from the Dutch East Indies and Malaya.

259. The Saudi Government, in spite of several reminders, had not at the end of the month been able to supply the Legation with their official tariff of dues, &c., for the forthcoming Haj season. The Ministry of Finance, however, informed His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires categorically that the official tariff for 1935, which was in course of being printed as part of the *Pilgrimage Guide* published annually in Mecca, was exactly the same as that of last year. British authorities concerned have been, therefore, notified to that effect.

260. A Swiss lady, Mme. Pignet, arrived from Europe on the 21st, and was still here at the end of the month. She is on a visit to the Italian Chargé d'Affaires.

261. By the same boat a Russian lady arrived here to join her husband, one of the two pilots of the Saudi Government's Wapiti planes (see paragraph 121 of the report for June).

262. Further progress has been made during the month in the formidable task of the mass repatriation of West African destitutes (reference paragraph 182 of the report for July), of whom there are believed to be about 2,000. Preparations have been made for a first contingent of 126 to leave on the 4th November for Suakin.

263. Government Departments and officials are now forsaking the chill altitudes of Taif for Mecca. In Jedda the month has shown high temperatures and considerable humidity. Impossible to rhapsodise over the joys of "drinking limitless old October" in this climate! It is poor, thin, tepid stuff compared with home-brew.

264. The position as regards the manumission of slaves during the month of October was as follows:—

On hand at the beginning of the month: Nil.  
Took refuge in October: 2 females and 2 children; 1 male.  
Manumitted in October and repatriated: 2 females and 2 children.  
Locally manumitted: Nil.  
On hand at the end of the month: 1 male.

[E 7156/2240/91]

No. 37.

### POLICY ON THE TRUCIAL COAST.

*Political Resident in the Persian Gulf to the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, New Delhi.—(Communicated by India Office, November 29.)*

Sir,  
*Camp, Bahrein, November 16, 1934.*  
WITH reference to my telegram No. 962 of the 6th November, 1934, in which I promised further details as to the settlement between the Sheikh of Dibai and his cousins. With the assistance of a report supplied by Colonel Loch, who was in charge at Dibai when the settlement was made, I can give the following summary:—

2. With reference to paragraph 5 of my telegram No. 895, dated the 24th October, 1934, the notices finally issued by me took the following form:—

(A) I am directed by the Honourable the Political Resident to inform you that you, as ruler, must take such steps as you see fit to protect yourself and your administration from your consins. You should, however, ensure that the lives and property of British subjects residing in your territory are not in danger.



- (B) The Honourable the Political Resident, who has heard that there is unrest at Dibai, warns all inhabitants that, in the event of loss of life or property of British subjects in the town resulting from any disturbances, those responsible for causing such disturbance will be held to account.

3. Notice (A) contained a clear intimation to the sheikh that he was at liberty to take what measures he liked to deal with those who were endeavouring to depose him, while at the same time reminding him that proper precautions should be taken with regard to British lives and property. The sheikh was apparently fully alive to his responsibilities in this respect and even before the receipt of the notice had placed guards over the houses of British subjects.

Notice (B) emphasised the fact that, in case these lives and property were endangered as a result of any disturbances, those responsible for causing the disturbance would be held to account. The causes of the disturbance, though for various reasons I did not name them, were, in fact, the cousins.

4. With regard to the causes of the disturbance. For some years past Sheikh Said-bin-Maktum has had trouble with his cousins, the sons of the late Sheikh Rashid and Buti, which culminated in an attempt on his life on the 23rd September last and a proposal by them, during the sheikh's temporary absence from the town, to summon a Majlis to depose him. On Sheikh Said's return, encouraged by the measures of support, mentioned in paragraph 5 below, accorded to him, he issued an ultimatum to his cousins demanding that they should either come to his house and swear loyalty to him or quit the town. After lengthy negotiations carried on by members of the Al-bu-Falash (the sheikh's sub-tribe), a representative of each branch of the cousins presented themselves at the sheikh's house and swore the oath demanded. The result of the settlement is that the sheikh's position is now stronger than it has been for many years. The sheikh informed Colonel Loch that he was quite satisfied with the settlement and considered his position now secure. He expressed to Colonel Loch his gratitude for the support which had been accorded him. I think the general result of the Dibai incident has been, if all goes well, to strengthen our position appreciably along the Trucial Coast.

5. Perhaps the most satisfactory feature of the settlement between the sheikh and his cousins is that it was made by the sheikh himself with a measure of support from us which was useful to him, for which he is duly grateful, but which in no way involved us in interference in the internal affairs of Dibai. These measures consisted in the sending of a sloop by the senior naval officer at my request in the first instance with Khan Sahib Hussain-bin-Assan on board (the Residency agent himself being unable to leave Sharjah on account of illness), and then with Colonel Loch in charge; a flight of aircraft over Dibai arranged by the Air Officer Commanding, Bagdad, at my proposal; and the promise of a present of arms which I made to the sheikh and which I ensured should be known throughout the town. In this connexion, it may be noted that the sheikh can, on production of a "no objection" certificate from me, import arms, whether as a present or on payment.

6. As I stated in my telegram quoted above, the presence of the sloop and of aircraft had an excellent effect, and I am grateful to the senior naval officer and the Air Officer Commanding for their close co-operation. Khan Sahib Hussain-bin-Assan did good work and Colonel Loch, on his arrival, handled the situation effectively.

7. The Dibai incident has been closed satisfactorily. It raises, however, in an interesting form, the general question of our policy in that part of the Persian Gulf. The recent opening up of the Trucial Coast as part of the civil and strategical air route, necessitating the establishment of an air port at Sharjah, and of landing-grounds, flying-boat anchorages and petrol stores for the Royal Air Force aircraft at other places, has inevitably brought us into close contact with that coast, with which, until the last few years, we were less directly concerned. This closer contact has perhaps tended somewhat to obscure what our basic responsibilities actually are. These may be classified as follows:—

- (a) The protection of the lives and property of British Indian subjects. It may not be out of place to note here that as far as the commercial interests of these subjects are concerned it must be remembered that we have no order-in-council, and therefore we have no legal redress

there as in Muscat, Bahrein and Koweit for the claims, for instance, of these subjects against the subjects of a sheikh. All that can be done in such cases is to try and induce the sheikh concerned, through the Residency Agent, to force his debtor subjects to satisfy our plaintiff. Such action, if successful, results as a rule in some kind of compromise between the parties. Where it is not a case of civil claims but of danger to British lives and property in case of disturbance, we can, of course, take a much stronger line and warn the sheikh concerned of his special responsibilities in this connexion.

- (b) Under our treaties with the sheikhs we must prevent hostilities at sea, arms traffic, and the slave trade. We are also responsible for protecting the sheikhdoms by sea. In the case of Sharjah, under the terms of our Air Port Agreement with the sheikh, we have to protect him from any form of aggression arising from the air port being situated in his territory.
- (c) A new responsibility—the safety of the air route both for civil and Royal Air Force aircraft.

8. These are our actual responsibilities on which we should concentrate. We are not responsible for the enforcement of law and order nor for the stopping of hostilities on land, though, as in the past, we can endeavour, through the Residency Agent, to compose differences between sheikhs. We should not, however, make ourselves responsible for the enforcement of any agreements come to between sheikhs. We are, under our treaties, not responsible for the protection of the sheikhs on land, though doubtless in the case of serious encroachment or attack by a powerful enemy we should have to assist them. We are not responsible for keeping sheikhs on their thrones when they can no longer keep themselves there.

9. It is obvious that a policy for the Trucial Coast, based on the above general considerations, cannot be an ambitious one, but these considerations are put forward with strict regard to the hard facts of local circumstances. However much at any particular juncture any particular section of a Trucial sheikhdom, including perhaps the sheikh himself, for their own ends, might welcome our active interference in their domestic affairs, there would certainly be an opposition party who would bitterly resent it. Moreover, and this is a most important factor, any such active interference would sooner or later involve us in supporting such interference by force. What are the forcible means at our disposal?

- (1) The landing of an armed party from a sloop.
- (2) Bombardment from the sea.
- (3) Bombing by aircraft.
- (4) Blockade.

(1) Is a very hazardous measure. (2), (3) and (4) are practicable, but while His Majesty's Government might be prepared to consider such measures in the discharge of our legitimate responsibilities as set forth in paragraph 7 above, I am convinced that they would certainly not sanction them to support the consequences of some act of interference—however desirable in itself—which had been made in the internal affairs of a sheikhdom.

10. With reference to the air facilities mentioned at the beginning of paragraph 7 above. The urgent necessity of obtaining these has inevitably dominated our policy on the Trucial Coast for the last five years. Ever since the decision was made to transfer the air route from the Persian to the Arab side of the gulf, it is hardly an exaggeration to say that no political officer, whether Resident or otherwise, has been able to visit that coast without being under the trying obligation of endeavouring to extract—as painlessly as possible—air facilities from some more or less reluctant sheikh. This reluctance was chiefly based on the fear that the obtaining of air facilities was merely the first step towards the establishment of British administration over the sheikhdoms, and the Sheikh of Sharjah, for example, was careful to insert a clause in his Air Port Agreement that the granting of that port in his territory in no way entitled us to interfere in his internal affairs. This fear, I trust, the sheikhs are now beginning to understand is unfounded (though it is an additional argument for



pursuing a policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of the Trucial Coast), and the facilities in question have been acquired, I am glad to say, without the exercise of force, though only after interminable bargainings and negotiations which have left little time for the settlement of other matters. Now that these facilities are actually in being the sheikhs do not, I think, regret their acquiescence. They appreciate the favourable monetary terms they have received—especially in these hard times, and in certain cases, as at Sharjah, they benefit by a public wireless station, and—shortly I hope—by a post office. The Sheikh of Dibai, for instance, has stated more than once that he bitterly regrets his refusal to have the air port at his town. At the same time they—the sheikhs—for some years past have had to be harassed and hustled, when they know very well—and personally I quite agree with them—that “haste is from the Devil.” Once the question of the Yas Island tank is settled, concerning which Colonel Loch is paying a visit to Abu Dhabi shortly, the last of the air facilities will have been obtained on the Trucial Coast. It will then be possible for my tours, and those of the political officers under me, to that part of the gulf to assume the more pleasant complexion of visits undertaken to establish friendly relations with the Arab rulers, who should now be left in peace to settle down and adapt themselves to the new conditions which the coming of an important air route has brought to their territories.

11. *To sum up.*—The Dibai incident (paragraphs 1-6) was satisfactorily settled by a general policy of laying the responsibility on the sheikh himself of dealing with internal trouble. He was given a free hand to deal with those who wished to depose him, and at the same time was informed that he should take precautions for the safeguarding of British lives and property. The malcontents were also reminded that they had a special responsibility in this respect. The sheikh had a measure of support from us which was useful to him, and for which he is grateful, but which in no way involved us in the internal affairs of Dibai. Further incidents on the Trucial Coast elsewhere might, *mutatis mutandis*, be dealt with on the same lines. With regard to our future policy on the Trucial Coast which has been raised by the Dibai incident. We have certain definite responsibilities on that coast (paragraph 7) which we cannot avoid, and on which we should concentrate. We should avoid taking on new ones (paragraph 8), the most important of which would be the preventing of hostilities between sheikhs on land, though whenever opportunity occurs we should give our good offices to the rulers for the composition of their differences. The main argument for avoiding active interference in the internal affairs of the Trucial Coast is that, sooner or later, we would be compelled to support this interference by force, which would be most inadvisable (paragraph 9). For some years past our policy on the Trucial Coast has been dominated by the urgent necessity of obtaining air facilities from its sheikhs (paragraph 10), who—though they now appreciate the advantages which they receive in return for granting such facilities—have had to be hustled by us in obtaining them. The facilities in question having been received, there will be more opportunities for cultivating personal and friendly relations with the sheikhs, who should now, as far as possible, be left in peace to adapt themselves to the new conditions which the establishment of the air route has so rapidly brought about in their territory.

I would be grateful if the Government of India, should they see fit, would give their general approval of the policy outlined above, which can then become a guide for the future.

I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, the senior naval officer, Persian Gulf, the Air Officer Commanding British Forces in Iraq, and the Political Agent, Bahrein.

I have, &c.

T. C. FOWLE, *Lieut.-Colonel,*  
*Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.*

[E 6510/722/25]

No. 38.

*Sir John Simon to Sir A. Ryan (Jedda).*

(No. 452.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 13, 1934.*

SINCE my conversation with you on the 25th October, I have considered further the suggestion that His Majesty's Government might agree to abandon the right of manumission at present exercised by His Majesty's Minister at Jedda in return for the adoption by the Saudi Government of effective measures against slavery.

2. You will recall that, in the course of the conversation with the Saudi Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs which took place at the Foreign Office on the 20th September, and in which you yourself took part, Fuad Bey Hamza suggested that King Ibn Saud might be persuaded to take action with a view to limiting the future importation of slaves into Saudi Arabia and with a view to alleviating the lot of such slaves as already existed in that country, provided that such action were made to appear spontaneous and could not be represented as having been extorted from him by foreign pressure. Fuad Bey added, however, that King Ibn Saud would require in advance some guarantee that, if he were to take action in this sense, His Majesty's Government would be prepared in return to abandon their present right of manumission. A copy of the record of this conversation, which was the second of those held in London, was enclosed in my despatch No. 353 of the 3rd October to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Jedda.

3. There are, in principle, grave objections to any action which may be construed as in any way a relaxation of the warfare which His Majesty's Government have consistently waged against the institution of slavery or as a surrender of any weapon which they are at present able to use in their attacks on that institution. At the same time, I have been impressed by the evidence adduced in your memorandum,<sup>(1)</sup> written at the Foreign Office on the 23rd October, 1934, a copy of which is enclosed for reference, to show that the right of manumission at present enjoyed in Saudi Arabia by His Majesty's Government depends, in fact, for its effective exercise upon the goodwill of the Saudi Government, and must consequently be regarded, not only as a precarious, but even as a wasting, asset. In view of that evidence, I am disposed at least to examine the possibility of some arrangement on the lines suggested by Fuad Bey. Before, however, I can reach any final decision as to the advisability of such an arrangement, I shall need to be more fully informed regarding the exact nature of the legislation which King Ibn Saud would propose to introduce in this connexion, and the probable degree of effectiveness with which it would be carried out.

4. In principle, if properly framed and carried out, both of the measures suggested by Fuad Bey in London might be acceptable, provided that their execution could be properly guaranteed. With regard to the first of these, namely, the prohibition of the further importation of slaves into Saudi Arabia, Sir George Maxwell, with whom I have also discussed this matter, has suggested that possibly the Saudi Government might be urged to adhere to clause (a) of article 2 of the International Slavery Convention of 1926. The relevant section of that article runs as follows:—

“The high contracting parties undertake, each in respect of the territories placed under its sovereignty, jurisdiction, protection, suzerainty or tutelage, so far as they have not already taken the necessary steps: (a) To prevent and suppress the slave trade.”

5. I shall be glad to learn whether, in your view, this suggestion, which appears to have much to recommend it, would be practicable. If, for some reason, King Ibn Saud would, in your opinion, be likely to object to the idea of acceding to any part of an international convention on this subject, but might still be willing to take the desired action, do you consider that action to this end might equally effectively be embodied in exchange of notes between His Majesty's Government and the Saudi Government in some such terms as those of the exchange of notes which took place between the Resident at Aden and the Imam of the Yemen on the conclusion of the Anglo-Yemeni Treaty of Friendship and

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.



Mutual Co-operation in February of the present year? Copies of the texts<sup>(1)</sup> of these notes are enclosed in this despatch for convenience of reference.

6. Further, I consider that, before consenting to any arrangement on the lines proposed by Fuad Bey, His Majesty's Government would be entitled to satisfy themselves that any proclamation or legislation issued or commanded by him against the importation of slaves into his dominions would be capable of effective enforcement. His Majesty's Government would wish, for example, to be fully informed in advance what machinery would be provided for the execution of any decree or legislation in this matter; what punishment would be inflicted for the infringement of the law; whether slaves imported in violation of the law would be entitled to freedom; and whether, if this were so, King Ibn Saud would guarantee to give them such freedom. The same necessity for precise information in advance as to the details of the action to be taken would also apply in the case of the second measure suggested by Enad Bey, namely, action taken to alleviate the present conditions of slavery in Saudi Arabia.

7. Subject to these conditions, I am prepared to consider any proposals which the Saudi Government may wish to put forward, and you are authorised to discuss the question with them on these lines in whatever manner you may consider most appropriate. I should, however, make it clear that I am definitely opposed to the abandonment by His Majesty's Government of their existing right of manumission unless the Saudi Government can offer adequate compensation, that is to say, unless they can make proposals, on the effective execution of which His Majesty's Government can rely, and which would be at least as satisfactory as the present system in securing the actual reduction of slavery. For this reason I am not disposed to consider any proposal for less effective, or less comprehensive, action than that already outlined by Fuad Bey. I observe in this connexion that it was provisionally suggested to Fuad Bey during the conversation with him in London that the question of slavery might figure in any negotiations which might be undertaken between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Saudi Government with a view to a general settlement of major questions outstanding between them. While I have no objection to your using the occasion of such negotiations to discuss the question of slavery, if these negotiations are, in fact, approved by His Majesty's Government and take place, and if you consider that the subject can be most advantageously dealt with in this manner, I am not willing that this question should be treated as part of the general process of compensation and adjustment which such negotiations, if they take place, will doubtless entail. That is to say, the right of manumission, which His Majesty's Government at present enjoy, should not be regarded as an asset which may be traded against some countervailing advantage in another sphere, but can only be abandoned in return for some action by the Saudi Government which is specifically directed towards the effective limitation or abolition of slavery.

I am, &c.

JOHN SIMON

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

[E 7512/77/25]

No. 39.

*Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.—(Received December 17.)*

(No. 349.)

Sir,

Jedda, November 27, 1934.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 360 of the 12th December, 1933, relative to the visit to this country by air of an Egyptian commercial and financial mission headed by Muhammad Talaat Harb Pasha, I have the honour to inform you that on the 22nd November a similar mission arrived from Egypt by aeroplane, almost a year since the first visit was made. The members of the mission this year are Midhat Yeghen Pasha, chairman of directors of the Banque Misr; Muhammad Talaat Harb Pasha, deputy chairman of directors of the Banque Misr and Egyptian Senator; Fuad Bey Sultan and Ismail Bey Jad Barakat, members of the board of directors of Banque Misr; Kemal Bey Aloui, manager of Misr Airwork, S.A.E.; and Muhammad-al-Masiri Bey, manager of the Egyptian Steam Navigation Company. The party, which is considerably stronger in its composition than that of last year, arrived towards sunset in two aeroplanes, and

were officially welcomed on arrival by the Amir of Jedda, who was accompanied by local officials, and notables and members of the Egyptian consulate.

2. I understand that the two aeroplanes, a De Havilland Dragon (as last year) and a Tiger Moth, made the journey from Egypt in one day, leaving Cairo at 5 A.M., an improvement on last year's performance, when the flight was made in two stages. Short halts were made this year at Tor, Wejh and Yanbu. The pilots are Mr. G. S. Brown (flight-lieutenant R.A.F. Reserve) and Ismail Effendi Sidky.

3. Talaat Pasha, who called on His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires the day after his arrival, left with his associates for Mecca by car on the 25th November. He is expected to leave here on the 28th November by air for Yanbu, whence he will visit Medina by car, and return to Egypt by air on the 1st December.

4. I hope to be in a position to report more fully in due course on the objects of this second visit to the Hejaz. Generally, I think, it may be assumed that the mission will interest itself, as last year, in making arrangements for the reception of Egyptian pilgrims coming to this country by the Egyptian steamers *Zamzam* and *Nil*, and in taking further steps to establish here branches of the Banque Misr.

5. The mission do not appear to be the guests of the Saudi Government this year, and whilst in Jedda have been accommodated in the new premises taken by the Banque Misr during the past year, which were originally intended, it is believed, for the Soviet Legation. Generally, it may be said that less publicity has been given to this visit than to its counterpart of last year; I have still to hear of the broadcast distribution of piece-goods, &c., of Egyptian manufacture, whilst this year the aeroplanes have not been actively engaged in treating the Jedda populace to joy-rides.

6. I was informed by my Egyptian colleague, some time before the arrival of the mission, that Talaat Harb Pasha had requested permission of the Saudi authorities to be allowed to fly to Riyadh to meet the King. I understand that the Saudis have been unable to accede to this request.

7. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Department of Overseas Trade, and to the Acting High Commissioner for Egypt.

I have, &c.

A. S. CALVERT.

[E 7514/4344/25]

No. 40.

*Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.—(Received December 17.)*

(No. 351. Confidential.)

Sir,

Jedda, November 30, 1934.

WITH reference to Sir Andrew Ryan's despatch No. 220 of the 10th July last, relative to the vicissitudes through which the Saudi Arab Government's embryonic air force is now passing, I have the honour to report that on the 18th November the foreign personnel of the force was augmented by the arrival by the steamship *Talodi* from Suez of two more Russians, stated to be, like the two already here, "White" Russians, whose names I understand are L. Kouchlauský and V. Makovetzky. One is stated to be a pilot and the other a mechanic, but I have so far been unable to ascertain which is which. I am not aware that these individuals have previously served in this country, as is the case with the first two Russians to whom reference is made in Sir Andrew Ryan's despatch No. 191 of the 18th June last, but there is a certain faint and superficial similarity between the above two names and those of Captain Kouznetzoff and Captain Minghonek, two of six names contained in a *note verbale* of the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Embassy in Rome of the 3rd April, 1922.

2. Of the two "White" Russians already here the name of the mechanic, Maximoff, has already been reported. The pilot's name I now learn is Nadenhoff—he was recently joined by his wife, who arrived here by Khedivial mail steamer on the 21st October.

3. The somewhat chequered history of the Wapiti planes has, since the despatch under reference was written, been further recorded in Jedda reports for

[11508]

L 2



July (paragraph 152), August (paragraph 193) and October (paragraph 246), where, briefly, the repair of the first machine, which crashed at Taif, and the successful flight of the second machine to Taif were noted. It is said that the third, and only remaining serviceable, Wapiti, was recently given a trial, but after a brief and incredibly noisy overture by the engine was wheeled back to its hangar.

4. Indeed, I learn from the representative of Misr Airwork, S.A.E., Kemal Bey Aloui, who accompanied Mahommed Talaat Harb Pasha's mission from Egypt, and who left again for that country by sea on the 28th November, that the machines have deteriorated to such an extent that they are now no longer reasonably safe to fly, and he expressed his admiration for the pluck of the Russian airmen in venturing aloft in such ill-conditioned craft, particularly as he understood that it was many years since the Russians had done any previous flying. Kemal Bey Aloui was, however, not impressed with their technical skill.

5. I was interested to learn that Kemal Bey Aloui, during his brief stay in Mecca, had sounded the Saudi authorities on the subject of supplying the Government with modern and up-to-date aircraft, and arranging for "Anglo-Egyptian" personnel to look after them. He expatiated to me on the ease with which his firm would be able to "service" such aircraft, and on their comparatively inexpensive upkeep. He had unfortunately found the Saudi authorities unresponsive. He detected a marked reluctance to buy British machines, and was informed that they would prefer American and German aeroplanes. As for personnel, reference was made by the Saudis to possibilities of securing help in that respect from the Turks. This reference was, I gathered, rather indefinite, and probably does not mean more than that the question of a loan of Turkish pilots and the project of sending a mission to Turkey to be trained in aviation (alluded to in Sir Andrew Ryan's despatch No. 191 of the 18th June last) are still alive. The Saudi authorities, it may be noted in passing, appear to have made no allusion to the French in the conversations with Kemal Bey Aloui.

6. The minds of such high Saudi officials as Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman are, I believe, becoming more and more preoccupied with the question of aerial development in this country, both for political purposes and for internal communication. The Minister of Finance (who is also the Deputy Minister of Defence) spoke recently to the Indian medical officer of the Legation of a proposed air-mail service between Jedda and Riyadh, and his idea of purchasing two new three-seater aeroplanes. He continued that he had recently received a useful map from the Californian Arabian Standard Oil Company, made as a result of aerial survey, which, when completed, would prove of value to the air service. No such service has as yet been more definitely mentioned, and considerable difficulties would have to be surmounted before any successful service in this country of such a nature could be anticipated. Perhaps American aircraft concerns are endeavouring, through the Californian Arabian Standard Oil Company, to interest the Saudi Arab Government, and Khalid-el-Qarqani may not inconceivably be the spokesman of German firms.

7. I am sending copies of this despatch to the Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Department of Overseas Trade and to the Acting High Commissioner, Cairo, to whom I would be grateful for any action he may be able to take to supplement the information in regard to the Russian airmen it has been possible to obtain here.

I have, &c.

A. S. CALVERT.

[E 7515/7515/25]

No. 41.

Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 354.)

Sir,

Jedda, December 3, 1934.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 300 of the 2nd October last, reporting the appointment of Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman, Minister of Finance, to be Deputy Minister of Defence, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the translations of two announcements by the latter Ministry regarding the small

"regular" army maintained by Ibn Saud, which appeared in the *Saut-al-Hejaz* of the 26th November. The first relates to enlistment in the ranks and contains the conditions and terms of service, whilst the second announces the establishment, as from the 16th January, 1935, of a military school at Mecca, where candidates for commissioned rank are to pursue a three years' course of training.

2. This evidence of Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman's determination to strengthen and improve the present standing army of Saudi Arabia is of considerable interest. The development may be the fruit of experience gained during the war with the Yemen, though I am unable to believe that the Saudi regular forces are to be largely increased. The tribes, and notably the Ikhwan, will always be Ibn Saud's most effective and least expensive military weapon.

I have, &c.

A. S. CALVERT.

Enclosure 1 in No. 41.

Translation from the *Saut-al-Hejaz*, No. 135 of November 26, 1934.

(1) Local News.

(e) Announcement by the Ministry of Defence.

THE Ministry of Defence announce that those who may desire to serve in the army for a period not less than three years should approach the Directorate of Military Affairs at Jarwal Barracks, Mecca, on every day between 9 A.M. and 12 o'clock, with the exception of Fridays.

The Government will supply food to the soldiers, and they will receive their salaries just as other Government officials.

The conditions are as follows:—

- (1) The applicant should be a Saudi subject.
- (2) His age should be between 18 and 22 years.
- (3) He should be of good character and free from any disease.

Enclosure 2 in No. 41.

Translation from the *Saut-al-Hejaz*, No. 135 of November 26, 1934.

(1) Local News.

(d) Announcement by the Ministry of Defence concerning the Military School at Mecca.

THOSE who desire to enter the military school at Mecca, which will be opened as from the 10th Shawaal, 1353 (16th January, 1935), should approach the Director of Military Affairs at Jarwal Barracks on every day between 9 A.M. and 12 o'clock, except on Fridays.

The course of study in this school is three years, and the applicant who passes the examination for the three courses will be appointed as second-lieutenant. The person who fails in the examination of the third course will be appointed as acting officer (warrant officer), and the person who fails in the examination of the second course will be appointed as n.c.o., but the one who fails in the examination of the first course will be dismissed from the school and will be given the option either to remain in the army the same as other soldiers or otherwise.

The conditions of the school are as hereunder:—

- (1) The applicant should be a Saudi subject.
- (2) His age should be between 18 and 22 years.
- (3) He should be free from contagious and other diseases, and should be of good character.



[E 7516/715/25]

No. 42.

*Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.—(Received December 17.)*

(No. 355: Confidential.)

Sir,

Jedda, December 3, 1934.

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith the Jedda report for November 1934.

2. Copies have been distributed as in the list appended for the report for January.

I have, &amp;c.

A. S. CALVERT.

Enclosure in No. 42.

JEDDA REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 1934.

## I.—Internal Affairs.

265. Ibn Saud continued during November to receive at Riyadh visits from detachments of Nejd tribesmen, of whom, it is stated, there has been a daily average of about 4,000 receiving the King's bounty. This has taken the form of one large meal a day for three or four days, rations of tea, sugar and the like, and an "annual allowance" in cash per man. This hospitable treatment, before the days of economic depression said to be an annual occurrence, has been resumed this year, but has been limited strictly to those who saw active service in the late war. It must nevertheless have cost Ibn Saud a pretty penny, and it would be interesting to know where the money came from. The number of fresh arrivals was daily diminishing about the middle of the month, and probably ceased soon after, as the King left for a week's hunting expedition to the west of the Dahna on the 20th.

266. Amir Feisal left for Riyadh on the 10th, leaving Sheikh Abdullah-al-Fadhl to act as Viceroy and President of the Council of Ministers. He was still absent from the Hejaz at the end of the month.

267. Fuad Bey Hamza had not returned at the end of November, but, to anticipate the report for next month, he arrived on the 2nd December by Italian steamer. He was met on board by a representative of the Amir and by the Italian Chargé d'Affaires, and, generally, his return was not so solitary an event as was his departure last July.

268. Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman also left for Riyadh early in November, but returned within a few days to Mecca, where, on the 25th, he gave a dinner to Muhammad Talaat Harb Pasha (see paragraph 275). He visited Jedda during the last four days of the month.

269. Other arrivals in Riyadh were Amir Abdul Aziz-bin-Misaid, Amir of Hail, who arrived from his post about the 28th October, and Khalid-al-Qarqani from Mecca a few days later. The presence of Amir Feisal and these various notables on visit to the Nejd capital lends colour to the rumour that the King has been holding an important conference.

270. (Reference paragraph 237 in last month's report.) Sheikh Abdul Aziz-bin-Muammar, Amir of Jedda, returned on the 11th, after an absence of more than two months in Taif and Mecca.

271. The situation in the Teima area is still obscure. It is stated that the trouble arose through the refusal of Abdul Karim-bin-Rumman to pay "zakat" and the murder of some Saudi tax-collectors. Ibn Saud is said to have sent a force of 400 men under Amir Muhammad to deal with the malcontents. Another informant, recently arrived from Riyadh, categorically denied the existence of any trouble whatsoever, either in Teima or elsewhere (for unconfirmed reports had represented discontent to be wide-spread amongst the tribes, particularly in Hasa amongst the Ajman). He did not appear to connect Ibn Misaid's visit to Riyadh with the situation at Teima; on the contrary, the Amir of Hail had gone to Riyadh "on leave, and was still there." This informant is usually reliable, but

it is difficult to accept so flat a contradiction of many other circumstantial reports. It is, however, equally difficult to accept the persistent stories current here of Wapiti aeroplanes, loaded up with bombs, leaving Jedda for a northern destination.

272. These Saudi aircraft have, it is true, shown a certain increase in activity. It still is doubtful whether the third of the three more or less serviceable machines has yet taken the air. Two more Russians, said to be "White," named L. Kouchlousky and V. Makovetzky, arrived from Suez on the 18th, to join their compatriots Nadenhoff and Maximoff. It is thought that of the four, two are pilots and two mechanics. The Russian lady referred to at paragraph 261 of last month's report is believed to be Mme. Nadenhoff.

273. Both Mecca newspapers published towards the end of the month two announcements by the Ministry of Defence, one setting forth conditions of entry and service in the army for those desiring to enlist, and the second announcing the establishment, as from the 16th January, 1935, of a military school at Mecca, where candidates for commissioned rank are to take a three years' course of training.

274. The reorganisation of the administration of Asir has been in progress for some little time. The principal Saudi official concerned, Seyyid Hashem, returned during the month to Jedda, and was understood to be satisfied with the progress made. He stated that tribal leaders were appointed (actually very few changes being made), boundaries and responsibilities fixed, and the oath of allegiance to Ibn Saud administered.

275. The visit of Talaat Harb Pasha, foreshadowed in paragraph 240 (g) of last month's report, was delayed apparently, for he did not arrive until the 22nd November. He was accompanied by Midhat Yeghen Pasha, chairman of directors of the Banque Misr, Fuad Bey Sultan and Ismail Bey Jad Barakat, members of the directorate of Banque Misr, Kemal Bey Aloui, manager of Misr Airwork, S.A.E., and Muhammad-al-Masiri Bey, manager of the Egyptian Steam Navigation Company. The party arrived in two machines, a de Havilland Dragon and a Tiger Moth, and made the journey from Egypt in one day. They motored up to Mecca on the 25th, were entertained to dinner by Sheikh Abdullah Suleiman, returning on the 27th, leaving the following morning by air for Yanbu, whence they motored, as on their visit of last year, to Medina. They were to resume their flight to Egypt on the 1st December. The visit was briefer this year than last, though the personnel was more numerous. It is yet early to ascertain the objects of the visit, but it is believed they chiefly concerned preparations for the reception of Egyptian pilgrims during the forthcoming Haj, the Banque Misr, and an Egyptian shipping service. Talaat Harb Pasha's liberality to charities this year is said to have proved disappointing to the Saudis, but it is stated that the Saudi Arab Government obtained a small loan from him, probably secured upon pilgrim dues to be paid by Egyptian pilgrims coming to this country. The pasha was anxious to fly to Riyadh, but permission was refused, a fact which may have disgruntled him somewhat.

276. The steamship *Mariut* and the steamship *Manzaleh* have called in at Jedda during the month. These two small vessels, flying the Egyptian flag, have plied experimentally, it is reported, between Suez, Jedda and Port Sudan. The Egyptian mission is understood to propose to follow up these trial runs, should they prove successful, with a more regular service.

277. (Reference paragraph 240 (d) of last report.) Mr. Twitchell returned from Taif on the 7th and left for Port Sudan on the 11th, returning here on the 14th. He stated towards the end of the month that his concession had been approved, subject to minor alterations, and he was daily expecting to receive definite news.

278. The Najaf-Medina overland pilgrim route (reference paragraph 242 of last report) is now being examined jointly by Saudi and Iraqi representatives, who met recently, the *Umm-al-Qura* of the 30th announced, at Jemeyma. The survey is to be carried out particularly between Jemeyma and Medina. Meanwhile, M. Van De Poll confirmed that he had been approached, whilst in Taif during the summer, to take up a concession for the transport of pilgrims over this route by car. He was unable to follow up the suggestion, as he had too little information on certain material points, saw a number of formidable snags in the proposals and, further, regarded the conditions imposed by the Saudi Arab Government as too onerous.



279. (Reference paragraphs 191 and 230 of the reports for August and September.) Mr. Philby arrived from Riyadh on the 17th. At the end of the month he stated he expected 220 motor cars to arrive here for his firm. On the 18th Mr. Fearn, the Ford motor engineer who had been with Mr. Philby here before, returned to Jeddah and resumed work with Sharqieh (Limited).

280. The announcement by the Saudi Arab Government in regard to the International Sanitary Convention of 1926 recorded at paragraph 245 of last month's report did not constitute a ratification, but, stated a representative of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in conversation with His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, signified the adoption of the convention, with certain specific reservations, as a piece of Saudi domestic law.

## II.—Frontier Questions and Foreign Relations in Arabia.

281. (Reference paragraph 250.) No further exchange took place during the month over the alleged violation of Saudi territory at Shaib Thanniya Tarif (the Saudi version of the name appears to be correct). Royal Air Force aeroplanes were, however, involved in another incident, this time in the Persian Gulf. Three planes forced landed on Jinnah Island on the 26th October, leaving again the same day for Bahrein. The Embassy in Bagdad were apparently not notified by the Royal Air Force of this unavoidable violation of Saudi territory until the 15th November. Not unexpectedly, the Saudi Arab Government received the regrets of this Legation very coldly, and declared their desire for a discussion on the whole subject "in order to arrive at a final settlement."

282. Saudi-Yemen relations appear, on the whole, happy, in spite of vague reports of frontier difficulties and smouldering bellicosity in some of the Imam's sons. The *Umm-al-Qura* of the 23rd November reproduced an article published in the *Sana-al-Iman* denying that anything had occurred to ruffle good relations between the two countries, or that troops were being concentrated on the Saudi-Yemen frontier. The Mecca paper took up the refrain, hailing with rather heavy fancy, first, the crescent, and, ultimately, the full moon of peace which now irradiates the Arabian landscape, and thanking God for the Treaty of Taif, in which the spirit of Arab unity and brotherhood is enshrined.

## III.—Relations with Powers Outside Arabia.

283. (Reference paragraph 254.) The Saudi authorities have now formally agreed to conversations on the subject of Legation dispensaries taking place with Fuad Bey Hamza, but have so far proved unyielding as regards the exemption, from customs dues, as hitherto, of medicines required for the forthcoming Haj.

284. No reply to the Legation's note on the Saudi Nationality Law was received from the Saudi Arab Government during the month. The French consulate applied early in November for instructions to make representations in much the same sense as those of this Legation summarised at paragraph 255 of the last report.

## IV.—Miscellaneous.

285. Mr. A. C. Oppenheim returned to the Legation from leave of absence on the 14th November.

286. Mr. Wiles, of Messrs. Turner Morrison and Co., arrived by the steamship *Alavi* on the 26th from Bombay and left the following day. He is making a tour of ports in the Red Sea.

287. Heer Riesenbach, a director of the Nederlandsche Maatschappij N.V., and his wife, arrived on the 18th and left for Egypt again on the 21st. It is understood that he inspected the Jeddah branch of his firm.

288. Mr. Axel, of the Standard Oil Company of New York, arrived from Egypt on the 25th, and stayed here with Mr. and Mrs. Philby. To anticipate next month's report, he left on the 2nd December for Massawa.

289. (Reference paragraph 258.) The number of pilgrims and pilgrim ships for November were:—

From India: One ship, 477 pilgrims.

From Straits Settlements: One ship, with 346 pilgrims.

290. (Reference paragraph 262.) During November over 500 East Africans were repatriated, either by Suakin or Massawa. It is estimated that approximately 1,000 remain to be dealt with.

291. (Reference paragraph 259.) The official tariff of pilgrim dues was issued in Mecca early in November in Urdu, Javanese and Persian and has been duly forwarded by the Legation to British Governments interested. No version in Arabic has, however, yet appeared.

292. Rain fell on the 7th fairly generally all over the Hejaz to as far north as Dhiba. In Mecca a fall of .35 inch was recorded. Further heavy rains fell on the 18th, and it is stated that Nejd, with the exception of Riyadh itself, has had satisfactory rains, too. Temperatures in Jeddah have, in consequence, fallen appreciably.

293. (Reference paragraph 271 of the report for December 1933.) The Waziriyeh water supply has, since it was last noticed in these reports, proved of increasing utility to Jeddah. Improvements have been made in the pipe-line, and the quality and quantity of the water has shown a marked difference. Not content with bringing the water to the Eidarus reservoir, the local committee have embarked on a scheme of laying water on to various quarters of the town, and, most usefully, to the Quarantine Quay for the use of pilgrims. A number of workmen are giving their services, and considerable progress has already been made. It is hoped to complete the work by the end of February. Far from exhausted by their labours during the day, the workmen turn for light refreshment to intensive merrymaking at night and parade the town almost nightly with a shattering pandemonium of drums and chorussing.

294. The position as regards the manumission of slaves during the month of November was as follows:—

On hand at the beginning of the month: 1 male.

Took refuge in November: 1 female.

Manumitted in November and repatriated: 1 male.

Locally manumitted: Nil.

On hand at the end of the month: 1 female.

[E 7520/4/25]

No. 43.

Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 359.)  
Sir,

Jeddah, December 4, 1934.

THE representative in Jeddah of the Standard Arabian Oil Company of California, Mr. W. J. Lenahan, informed me on the 1st December that he had received, by that day's mail, satisfactory news of the progress made by his company on the Hasa coast. He said that they had now decided to commence drilling operations, probably early in January, at Dammam, a point on the mainland opposite to Bahrein, about half-way between Jebel Dhahran and Qatif. Whilst this was the only place at which they proposed to drill at present, their geologists were busy pursuing their examination of the area of the concession. They were working in four parties, and were now, he understood, in northern Hasa in the neighbourhood of As Saffa. They were making good use of their aeroplane, which they had found invaluable.

2. Mr. Lenahan proceeded to say that they had also come to a satisfactory arrangement with the Saudi authorities over the use of wireless telegraphy. He quoted that part of article 19 of their concession, which confers on the company the right to use "all means of communication," and added that he had experienced considerable difficulty in persuading the Saudi Arab Government to see eye to eye with them in the interpretation of this. Now that this difficulty had been overcome, they proposed to make full use of wireless telegraphy in their operations. Jubail would be their centre in Hasa, and I understood him to say that other points in the field of their concession, where their representatives were at work, would be suitably equipped. He appeared to consider it possible that his office in Jeddah would, in time if not in the near future, be similarly furnished. I alluded to the expert staff he would require if he were to have a transmitting set here, to which he replied that he thought the apparatus would be of a comparatively simple type. These wireless sets were now being made, specially for his company, in the United States.



3. I am sending copies of this despatch to his Excellency the Viceroy of India, Foreign and Political Department, and to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire.

I have, &c.

A. S. CALVERT.

[E 7545/77/25]

No. 44.

*Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.—(Received December 18.)*

(No. 360.)

Sir,

*Jedda, December 4, 1934.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 349 of the 27th November last, relative to the Egyptian commercial and financial mission to this country, I have the honour to report that Talaat Harb Pasha, Midhat Yeghen Pasha and party (with the exception of Kemal Bey Aloui, who left the same day for Egypt by Khedivial mail steamer) left for Yanbu by air on the 28th November and after visiting Medina by car resumed their return journey to Egypt on the 1st December.

2. Talaat Pasha's visit this year is shorter than was expected and only two whole days were put in at Mecca. By some this is thought to be due to his dissatisfaction at being refused permission to fly to Riyadh to see the King. His donations to schools and hospitals were on a modest scale, according to report, but free distribution as charity of piece-goods and other Egyptian manufactures, which had not taken place when I wrote my despatch under reference, was subsequently undertaken on behalf of the Egyptian mission by the Jedda municipality on the 4th December.

3. I learn that Talaat Pasha was primarily interested in arranging with the Saudi authorities for further facilities this year for Egyptian pilgrims. The shipping agents will continue to be Messrs. Haji Abdullah Ali Reza and Co., according to their own account, and financial arrangements, which are said to include the perception of Saudi pilgrim dues from the individual pilgrims by Banque Misr and payment to the Saudi Arab Government in a lump sum, will be handled by Banque Misr or separately appointed agents here. Two large motor-launches, to seat 100 passengers each, are to be brought here by Banque Misr in order to facilitate the transport of pilgrims from the outer anchorage in the heavy seas. The present charges for sambuqs are to remain undisturbed, and the local interests involved are not to suffer. Indeed, it appears that Talaat Pasha has been at pains to assure local merchants and shippers that his objects are not to deprive them of the benefits they now enjoy from the pilgrimage, but to ensure greater comfort for Egyptian pilgrims, and increase their numbers, which this year he estimates at about 8,000. Pilgrims of the wealthier sort are to be accommodated in the new premises, in both Jedda and Mecca, now partly occupied by the offices of Banque Misr.

4. It is stated with some confidence by Mr. Philby that the Saudi Government have obtained from Talaat Pasha a loan, probably small and probably in the nature of an advance on account of pilgrims' dues, which will be paid by Egyptian pilgrims coming on Haj.

5. Two small steamers, the *Mariut* and *Manzaleh*, flying the Egyptian flag, have called at Jedda during the past few days from Suez and have proceeded to Port Sudan. They have carried small quantities of cargo, and are stated by Messrs. Haji Abdullah Ali Reza and Co., who have been appointed agents by Talaat Pasha, to be testing the possibilities of a more regular service.

6. The transport of pilgrims by air was not pursued, in view of the quarantine and other difficulties in the way. The Saudi authorities were not very ready to discuss the question of air development with members of the mission, as I have already reported in my despatch No. 351 of the 30th November. The question of a concession for the construction of a railway between Mecca and Jedda is said to have been touched on, but quite tentatively and without further more serious consideration.

7. I am sending copies of this despatch to the Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Department of Overseas Trade and to the Acting High Commissioner at Cairo.

I have, &c.

A. S. CALVERT.

[E 6722/669/91]

No. 45.

*India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 21.)*

Sir,

*India Office, December 20, 1934.*

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to transmit to you, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a despatch from the Political Resident, Bushire, on the subject of Iraqi aspirations with regard to Koweit.

I am, &c.

S. F. STEWART.

Enclosure 1 in No. 45.

*Political Resident in the Persian Gulf to Sir F. Humphrys (Bagdad).*

(No. 1073 S.)

Sir,

*Bushire, November 21, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to enclose herewith a copy of a letter, dated the 17th November, 1934, from the Political Agent, Koweit, reporting an interesting conversation which Major Holmes stated he had had with Mr. Yusuf Ghanima.

2. Major Holmes's veracity is by no means above suspicion, but in this case I do not see what he had to gain by inventing the conversation in question, and the view of Koweit held by the Iraq Government is, I should say, most unfortunately more or less that summed up by Major Holmes in paragraph 7 of Colonel Dickson's letter.

3. Mr. Yusuf Ghanima's reference to the Iraqi Post Office in Koweit (paragraph 6 of Colonel Dickson's letter) is significant in connexion with the views expressed in the Secretary of State for India's express letter, dated the 24th August, 1934, to the Government of India, Foreign and Political Department (as to which I gave my views in my express letter No. 1036 S of the 8th November, 1934, to the Government of India, Foreign and Political Department).

4. Mr. Yusuf Ghanima's reference to a railway from Basra to Koweit (referred to by Colonel Dickson in the same paragraph) is interesting. Koweit is in many ways the natural terminus of the railway, not Basra, and was originally in pre-war days proposed as the terminus of the Berlin-Bagdad Railway. The cost of building a railway from Basra to Koweit would be small.

I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, and to the Political Agent, Koweit.

I have, &c.

T. C. FOWLE, *Lieutenant-Colonel,*

*Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.*

Enclosure 2 in No. 45.

*Political Agent, Koweit, to the Political Resident, Bushire.*

(No. C-296.)

Sir,

*Koweit, November 17, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to report the following rather instructive conversation, which I understand Major F. Holmes of the Koweit Oil Company had with his Excellency Mr. Yusuf Ghanima, Finance Minister to the present Iraq Government, at the end of October last.

2. Apparently Major Holmes has known Mr. Yusuf Ghanima for some years, and happened to be in Basra when the latter recently paid a visit to that town.

3. According to Major Holmes, Mr. Yusuf Ghanima, hearing that his friend was in Basra, sent for him, and enquired whether he, Major Holmes, on behalf of the Koweit Oil Company or some of his American friends, could not see his way to apply for an oil concession in the southern part of Iraq (Basra Liwa).



4. Major Holmes replied, jokingly, that neither he nor any other self-respecting company wanted to have anything to do with the Basra area, as there was no sign of oil there.

5. After some further "oil" talk, Yusuf Ghanima turned to the question of the status of Koweit, and condemned in no uncertain terms the "stupid obstinacy" of the sheikh (Ghanima's words) in his dealings with his well-meaning "mother State" of Iraq. He harped on the fact that the sheikh was blind, and could not see that Koweit's interests were bound up with Iraq.

6. He next touched on the fortunate political advantage which Iraq had gained for herself in having managed to get Koweit post and telegraph arrangements in her hands, and hoped that it would not be long before Iraq got a railway line through to Koweit.

This last, he regretted, could not be put through at present, as money was tight, but he hoped at some later date that it would be his good fortune to inaugurate a service.

When the time came for this, however, he hoped and trusted that the sheikh would have got rid of some of his nonsensical ideas about independence, and would have learnt "which side his bread was buttered on."

7. Major Holmes said that he could not say why he was regaled with the above, but suspected that the game was to get him to do a little bit of "propaganda" for Iraq with the sheikh. What Major Holmes did not like, however, was the contemptuous way with which the Finance Minister all the time referred to "little Koweit and her sheikh." As Major Holmes put it: "Anyone hearing Mr. Yusuf Ghanima might easily have supposed that Koweit was a miserable little village on the borders of Iraq, and her sheikh a petty chieftain with a lot of wind in his head."

8. Major Holmes said that his talk with the Minister lasted nearly two hours.

9. I would have reported the above earlier had it not been for the heavy work I have had in connexion with the date gardens.

I have, &c.

H. R. P. DICKSON,  
Lieutenant-Colonel.

[E 7796/714/25]

No. 46.

Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.—(Received December 31.)

(No. 365.)

Sir,

Jedda, December 9, 1934.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that my French colleague, M. Roger Maigret, who, as you are aware, is *Chargé d'Affaires en titre* of the French consulate here, informed me in the course of conversation yesterday that his Government now proposed to raise their mission in Saudi Arabia to the status of a Legation. Budgetary provision had been made, and he expected the change to date from the 1st January next. He stated, in answer to my enquiry, that the head of the post would hold the rank of Minister, and that he would remain on in that capacity. On my congratulating him, he explained that although he understood privately that his appointment had been contemplated by his Ministry in any case, yet Fuad Bey Hamza had interested himself with the French Government to secure his selection. The elevation of the French representation here, and the appointment of M. Maigret, may well have been, although the latter did not say so, amongst the questions discussed with the French Government by Fuad Bey Hamza during his recent visit to Europe.

2. M. Maigret, who, as is his wont, has remained virtually invisible during the summer, is again becoming locomotive, as he proposes to leave Jedda within a few days for a three weeks' visit to the Yemen. Upon his return from Sana, he hopes, before the Haj, to pay a brief visit to Syria to meet the High Commissioner there.

3. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Chief Commissioner at Aden and His Majesty's consul-general at Beirut.

I have, &c.

A. S. CALVERT.

[E 7797/79/25]

No. 47.

Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.—(Received December 31.)

(No. 366.)

Sir,

Jedda, December 10, 1934.

RELATIONS between Saudi Arabia and the Yemen, since the recent dispute, have to all appearances pursued an uneventful course and have ceased to occupy the forefront of public attention locally. Nevertheless reports, vague but persistent, have not been wanting that all is still not well in the Yemen. Frontier difficulties are hinted at, and perhaps somewhat exaggerated stories are current of the restiveness of the Seif-ul-Islam Ahmad, said to be under arms still at Sada and chafing under the restrictions imposed by his father the Imam.

2. I have been disposed to attach little importance to these rumours, and it is perhaps unnecessary to treat them seriously. My French colleague, M. Maigret, spoke to me yesterday, however, on this subject, and whilst admitting that his own information was indefinite, expressed the opinion that there undoubtedly did exist trouble it was, at present, difficult to diagnose. He hoped to leave Jedda shortly on a three weeks' visit to Sana, and expected to be able to arrive at a more accurate appreciation of the situation in the Yemen during that time.

3. The unrest may be of purely internal significance, and may be a natural reaction after the Imam's ill-success in the late war with Saudi Arabia. The press of both countries have, however, not entirely allayed misgivings recently by protesting with vigour that the two countries are now on the most friendly terms, and denying with emphasis the "false reports" put about by interested persons to the contrary. The *Umm-al-Qura* of the 23rd November quoted an article from the Sana newspaper the *Iman* in which reports of the concentration of troops on the Saudi-Yemen frontier were categorically denied. Peace and tranquillity prevailed; conditions had returned to normal; and concord reigned between the "two Moslem sects" (presumably the Zeidi and Shafi sects of the Yemen). From the Hejazi press, the *Iman* continued, it was understood that a similarly fortunate situation existed in this country. The *Umm-al-Qura* delightedly welcomed the article with lengthy variations on the themes of Arab brotherhood, the Treaty of Taif and the wiles of unscrupulous mischief-makers inspired by hatred and jealousy of the Arabs and of Islam. I do not propose to transmit to you a translation of this article.

4. It may not be out of place here to inform you, in regard to the Saudi-Yemen treaty settlement, of the insistence with which Mr. Philby continues to express his conviction that Ibn Saud did in fact receive a war indemnity from the Imam. He has more than once reverted to the subject. Ibn Saud, Mr. Philby stated quite recently, has for some two or three months been paying daily to his tribal visitors at Riyadh (as I have recorded in Jedda reports for October and November last) large sums in cash and kind, which my informant estimated at an average of 40,000 Maria Theresa dollars a day, or an approximate total over the whole period of about £100,000 gold. Where has this money come from if not from the Imam? £100,000 would probably be the amount of the indemnity. I still feel unable to share Mr. Philby's conviction, and I find that the French *Chargé d'Affaires*, to whom Mr. Philby has spoken in a similar strain, is equally sceptical. M. Maigret considered that Ibn Saud, to content the tribes disappointed of loot in the war, has probably had to make serious inroads on the Royal Treasury, and expressed his belief, from his personal knowledge of the Imam's character, that the latter would have continued the war, by no means lost to him after the fall of Hudeida, rather than have parted with so considerable a sum of money.

5. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome and His Majesty's Chief Commissioner at Aden.

I have, &c.

A. S. CALVERT.



*Mr. Calvert to Sir John Simon.—(Received December 31.)*

(No. 370.)

Sir,

*Jedda, December 11, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to refer to my despatch No. 351 of the 5th December, 1933, in which I ventured to submit a short review of the general financial situation in this country. I again propose to attempt, with the modest material available in a country where statistics of any value are unknown, an appreciation of the general financial and economic condition of Saudi Arabia at the present time.

2. Since the despatch under reference was written, the intervening months have witnessed little real alleviation of the financial difficulties with which Ibn Saud was then finding himself increasingly confronted. The principal drain on his resources, due to the long-drawn struggle with the Yemen, the necessity of providing for an army in the field and at the same time of cementing the loyalty of tribal leaders in Nejd by subsidies and supplies in kind, can scarcely have diminished until the operations came to a successful conclusion and the troops returned to their own country during July and August. Even then demobilisation involved the grant of gratuities in rials and in kind to each individual soldier, a process which began at Taif upon the immediate return of the troops and continued at Riyadh until mid-November. Mr. Philby estimates the cost to Ibn Saud of these gratuities alone to be in the neighbourhood of £100,000 gold. Thus the whole period under review has been one of abnormal military expenditure, in prosecuting the war and, at its conclusion, in paying in hard cash a handsome insurance premium against tribal discontent at a lootless victory.

3. It may not unnaturally be asked where are the resources upon which the King could draw so liberally. Mr. Philby is convinced that the explanation lies in the receipt of a war indemnity from the Imam of the Yemen. I am not alone in considering this view difficult to accept, and incline to the belief that the King has found himself compelled, in order to content his returning soldiery, to make serious inroads upon the Royal Treasury, a reservoir of unknown dimensions.

4. That the Saudi Exchequer could have proved of much assistance can hardly be expected, even in the resourceful hands of the Minister of Finance. Little additional taxation, except in the almost negligible form of a stamp duty, was imposed and in spite of certain reports to the contrary, no resort was made, as far as can be ascertained, to the exaction of forced loans.

5. The revenue, which in the despatch under reference was represented as exiguous, has probably shown some improvement, but not of a nature to offset expenditure. The pilgrimage of 1934 exceeded 25,000, in comparison with 20,000 of the year before and pilgrim dues to the Government and activity in the bazaars were stimulated in proportion. The prospects for the forthcoming pilgrimage are still conjectural, but it may not be excessive optimism to expect a slight increase again in 1935. The remarks in last year's report in regard to the general level of poverty of latter-day pilgrims still apply, although the efforts of Talaat Harb Pasha, upon whose activities I have reported elsewhere, are directed towards inducing Egyptians of the wealthier sort to perform the Haj.

6. Customs receipts are still one of the several unknown factors in Saudi Arabia's economic equation. One might perhaps hazard the opinion that there has this year been a slight improvement. The small increase in the pilgrimage and the partial liquidation of old stocks of goods in the hands of local merchants must have exerted a favourable influence. Receipts, however, are mortgaged as has been now the practice for some years by the system of drafts to which a reference was made in the despatch under reference.

7. The Saudi Government's revenue has been augmented this year, it is stated, by the receipt during the early summer of £20,000 gold from the Standard Oil Company of California, a sum believed to represent the second instalment of the initial loan promised by the company under the terms of their Hasa oil concession. A further loan, said to be very small, is reported to have been obtained in November from Talaat Harb Pasha, and is thought probably to be secured on Saudi pilgrim dues, which will be paid by Egyptians during the

forthcoming Haj. Mr. Philby, at any rate, was made happy by being paid "£2,000 or £3,000," half in cash and half in a draft on Messrs. Haji Abdullah Ali Ridha and Co., confidential agents and importers to the Saudi authorities, not in respect, I understand, of outstanding debts, but to finance the import of motor vehicles in accordance with his concession.

8. Indeed, the position of the Saudi Government in regard to both their internal and foreign obligations is as unsatisfactory as ever. Certainly no attempt has been made during the year under review to meet the long outstanding debts due to His Majesty's Government and the Government of India, and Ibn Saud appears unlikely to manifest any great readiness to do so in the near future.

9. The Minister of Finance has continued to pursue a policy of rigid economy in Government expenditure, although the opinion has been heard that money, for day to day requirements of an essential nature, is not so tight as was the case a year ago. Official salaries are still seriously in arrear and for more than the first six months of the Arabic year 1353 (until the end of October) Government servants had received a bare two months' salary, and that at the "par" rate of 10 rials to 110 piastres miri gold (£1 gold), whereas the current rate for rials had fluctuated between 24 and 22 rials to the gold pound.

10. Saudi currency during the year has remained relatively steady and did not show any marked tendency to depreciate after the last pilgrimage, as I anticipated in my despatch under reference. The rial rate varied within the limits indicated above, and at the time of writing is 22, betraying again the customary appreciation which marks the arrival of pilgrims from abroad.

11. The general tone of trade in the Hejaz is stated to be somewhat healthier, the manager of the Dutch banking concern here, the Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij, stating that during the past year there had been slightly more movement and much less reluctance on the part of merchants to take up bills. This applied particularly to the past six months. I am indebted to him for the following figures compiled by himself and, he insists, very tentative, of the imports and exports for the Arabic years 1351 and 1352:—

	1351.	1352.
	£ sterling.	£ sterling.
Imports	2,028,000	1,657,850
Exports	...	150,685

Piece-goods and flour, amongst the more important commodities, showed an increase in 1352 over 1351, most others falling away in the second year. The number of different headings of commodities imported was only 108 in 1352 as compared with 149 in 1351. These figures, partial and approximate though they may be and although they relate, except for the last part of 1352, to the years prior to the period covered by this survey, are nevertheless of some interest.

12. The picture drawn in the foregoing paragraphs may indicate a far from satisfactory condition, but it is not one of wholly unrelieved gloom. Whilst there is still considerable and serious destitution amongst the poorer classes, which the distribution of food and clothing by Ibn Saud and the charity of the well-disposed do little to alleviate, the cost of living is not appreciably higher to the Hejazi. Rents, on the other hand, have fallen considerably in Mecca and Jedda, and, in the latter town, building of new houses, in itself not a symptom of economic depression, is going on on all hands. Rains in the Hejaz have been plentiful everywhere during the autumn, and reports are satisfactory from many parts of Nejd. Ibn Saud therefore is issuing, it is announced, seed to cultivators and a good harvest in due course will do much to repair the ravages of past privations.

13. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &c.

A. S. CALVERT.



## CHAPTER II.—IRAQ.

[E 4375/197/34]

No. 49.

*Mr. Rendel to Iraqi Minister.*

(Confidential.)

My dear Minister,

*Foreign Office, July 6, 1934.*

FOLLOWING on our conversation of the 3rd July, on the question of Perso-Iraqi frontier relations, and in confirmation of what I told you over the telephone this morning, I write to say that we have now considered the various points which you put before us on the 16th June, and that our views on them are as follows:—

2. In the first place, we entirely agree as to the suitability of the practical measures which we understand your Government are contemplating taking in the frontier zone, i.e., that a senior administrative official should be despatched to the zone as soon as possible to investigate the position in detail, and that the administration of the Iraqi areas in the immediate vicinity of the frontier should, as far as possible, be strengthened and tightened up.

3. Secondly, we consider that the Iraqi Government are on sound legal ground in taking their stand on the 1913-14 delimitation, which, in our view, was a final determination of the frontier and valid in international law.

4. Lastly, we are inclined to suggest that, as a sequel to the measures referred to above which your Government are already contemplating, the Iraqi Government might be well advised to send the Persian Government a note containing a comprehensive statement of their complaints, protesting against the Persian Government's action, and demanding a full explanation of the legal grounds on which the Persian Government base their refusal to recognise the 1913-14 delimitation of the frontier. This would have the effect of making the position plain, of reducing the risk of future misunderstanding, and bringing the Persian Government definitely into the open.

Yours very sincerely,

G. W. RENDEL.

[E 4444/2701/93]

No. 50.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received July 10.)*

(No. 355 Very Confidential.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, June 26, 1934.*

WITH reference to Sir Francis Humphrys's despatch No. 214 of the 18th April, I have the honour to report that King Ghazi has followed up his visit to Southern Iraq with a tour of the northern provinces.

2. The Royal party, which included, among others, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Economics and Communications, the President of the Chamber of Deputies and Rustam Beg Haidar, left Bagdad early on the 9th June and proceeded by motor transport to Mosul. The first few days of the tour are described in the enclosed copy of a despatch from His Majesty's acting consul at Mosul. On the 14th April His Majesty had arranged to visit Diana-Rowanduz, but you will observe from the enclosed copy of a despatch from His Majesty's acting vice-consul at Diana that he proceeded no further than Batas, returning to Arbil the same night. The party returned to Bagdad on the 17th June, having spent a night each at Suleimani and Kirkuk.

3. It appears that the Royal tour was not the success that the glowing accounts which appeared in the local press would have us believe. I myself visited Mosul shortly afterwards, and the impression that I gained tends to confirm the comments made by His Majesty's acting consul. I do not, however, yet subscribe to the allegation of drunkenness imputed to His Majesty, even though it may have the authority of the Administrative Inspector and of the Adviser to the Interior, a charge which for the present I prefer to consider as not proven. What I think marred the visit was the absence of good counsel and the King's inexperience and lack of *savoir-faire*. There is nobody in the Royal

entourage who is competent to show this young man how to comport himself as a King. Moreover, he never had a proper chance before his accession to the throne; hence, no doubt, his treatment of his Kurdish and other guests, arising, I hope, out of ignorance. There is less excuse for the visit to Simel, but it is hard for the boy King to resist the influence of the notorious Director-General of Police, Subih Najib, or of army hotheads. This visit has not increased either the popularity or the prestige of the King in the north.

I have, &amp;c.

G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

Enclosure I in No. 50.

*Acting Consul Finch to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes (Bagdad).*

(No. 16. Confidential.)

Sir,

*Mosul, June 20, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to report that His Majesty King Ghazi visited the Liwa of Mosul from the 9th to the 13th June last. On the way from Bagdad he lunched with Sheikh Ajil at Shergat, and reached Mosul at 5.45 p.m. He was accommodated at the newly and barely finished Qasr-al-Dhiáfah, which is to serve as a Royal resthouse and mutessarif's residence, though it is really only large enough for one of these purposes. The town was decorated with national flags, and several triumphal arches were placed along the main routes, and illuminated by night.

2. On the morning of the 10th June he held a levee at the Qasr-al-Dhiáfah, and in the afternoon he opened the fine new steel bridge over the Tigris, after which a tea-party was given by the municipality in the Amery Gardens on the left bank of the river.

3. The 11th was spent at Dohuk, where he was the guest of the army battalion now quartered there for summer exercises. Before returning, he made an excursion to the village of Simel.

4. On the 12th he laid the foundation-stone of the new civil hospital outside the northern extremity of Mosul, and on the morning of the 13th His Majesty left for Arbil.

The Royal party included the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister for Communications and Economics, the President of the Chamber of Deputies, the Master of the Royal Diwan, the Director-General of Police and the ex-Minister Rustam Beg Haidar. All the principal notabilities from the outlying districts of the liwa were present in the town during the visit and attended the public functions that were given.

5. It was noticeable that ceremony was very perfunctory and that nearly everybody was kept at arm's length. For all the parading and waiting that we did, the consular corps, foreign officials and visiting tribal chiefs had no more contact with the Royal party than to shake hands with His Majesty on his arrival and to file past and bow ("like sheep at a taxing," as a Kurd remarked) at the levee. The Minister for Foreign Affairs never approached the consuls, neither of the Ministers came anywhere near the Administrative Inspector, and neither Major Pover (Inspector of Public Works, Northern Division) nor Dr. McLeod (civil surgeon) received more than the spectator's invitation to the bridge and hospital ceremonies. The bridge ceremony was well done up to the cutting of the tape; after that the handling of the crowd became difficult, and we were shoved across the Tigris by all the ragtag and bobtail of the town. At the garden party the King sat at a "high table" in solitary state, and no one was introduced.

6. This would not have been accorded so much mention had it not been typical of the treatment received by the tribal chiefs. They attended the public functions and the levee as described, and, in addition, were invited with local Iraqi officials to a dinner party on the evening of the 10th, at which the mutessarif presided and the King did not appear. This is all the more regrettable when it is considered that the reason for His Majesty's abstention from evening celebrations was that he spent those hours playing poker and

[11508]

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getting drunk. I do not know how far this is common knowledge, but, as I am told it is habitual, I can only suppose that it is a *secret de polichinelle*.

7. A few of the notables of Mosul managed to get an audience and presented a petition requesting: (a) Rail connexion with Kirkuk, Syria and Turkey; (b) metalling of Mosul's road communications; (c) settlement of tribes and abolition of the "khawa," or tribal safe-conduct payment; (d) a land settlement committee; and several minor demands. But no Kurds obtained an audience, except the very ones least entitled to it, Sheikh Ahmad of Barzan and his brothers, who were brought into conclave with the King by the Director-General of Police without the mutessarif's knowledge. These people have returned to their districts with not only a bad impression, but also an object-lesson in comparative importance as earned by loyalty and by rebellion. The reason for keeping the Kurds away from the Royal person was, I am informed, that it was feared that some of them were ready with petitions of an anti-Assyrian nature whose public presentation would have been awkward.

8. This being so, the visit to Sinel in the company of the military becomes a more remarkable blunder. It consisted of a quarter of an hour's walk round the village, and no motive can be suggested for it but that which would take us to Waterloo.

9. As to the warmth of the general reception by the populace I find it difficult to judge. On these occasions eastern crowds are apt to be obsessed by curiosity to the exclusion of other feelings. There were the usual hand-clapping and piercing feminine ululation, but there was certainly nothing like the demonstration that accompanied the late King's funeral or Bekr Sidky's return from his triumphal Assyrian campaign. For several days previous to the visit threatening anonymous letters were planted about the town. One informed His Majesty that there would be revolution if he came to Mosul, for he was surrounded by Ministers, judges and officials that were oppressive and corrupt. Another alluded to the Miski case, and stated that Dr. Miski had given bribes of £200 to get his adversaries condemned. Another was anti-Christian, and caused some trepidation. But these were, no doubt, the work of certain cliques that are out for trouble, and were at the back of the recent disturbance reported in my despatch No. 12 of the 2nd June last; and the authorities rightly took little notice of them. However, one cannot help observing that the King's visit was postponed several times, and that, when he did come, his arrangements were made at the last minute and continually changed, always in the direction of curtailment. The former was, I understand, due to family reasons, and the latter, besides being a chronic disease of eastern courts, was, perhaps, caused by the weather being hotter than it would have been had he come when first proposed; but ill-wishers will probably attribute it to fear.

10. In general, I believe that popular enthusiasm was lukewarm and that the loyalty of the Kurdish chiefs has been definitely chilled.

I have, &c.

J. G. FINCH

Enclosure 2 in No. 50.

*Acting Vice-Consul Ogden to Acting Consul Finch (Mosul).*

(No. 24. Confidential.)

Sir,

*Diana-Rowanduz, June 18, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the visit of His Majesty King Ghazi to this district, arranged for Thursday last, the 14th June, did not take place as proposed.

2. The final arrangements as they stood late on the evening of the 13th were that His Majesty was to leave Erbil at a very early hour the following morning, motor with his suite direct to Jindian, there take tea and have the local notables presented to him, return to Batas for lunch, and afterwards to Erbil.

3. I arrived at Jindian on the morning of the 14th shortly before 7 A.M. and was informed by the commandant of police from Rowanduz that His Majesty was not proceeding further than Batas. I returned to the vice-consulate and informed you of the position by telephone and, acting on your instructions, did not go to Batas.

4. The cancellation of the Royal visit at the last moment was quite in keeping with the haphazardness which characterised the arrangements from the very first. Dates, times and places were changed almost hourly. The local authorities and inhabitants had taken pains to do His Majesty honour to the best of their ability. A triumphal arch in the approved local style had been erected at the junction of the Rowanduz road with the side-road leading to Diana village. The customs post at Jindian was decorated with bunting and the best coffee cups and tea glasses in Rowanduz had been brought down to grace the Royal table. Police had been posted since the previous evening at intervals all along the road from Khalisan through the Rowanduz Gorge to Jindian. When I arrived at Jindian on the morning of the proposed visit a few of the local Kurdish notables were present, together with the commandant of police. The majority, however, had been warned of the cancellation of the visit in time to prevent them leaving Rowanduz. Those whom I met at Jindian, whilst not expressing their feelings in so many words, were obviously annoyed and disgusted with the whole affair. It is certainly safe to say that the prestige of the Crown has not been enhanced in this district as a result of the Royal tour. The Rowanduz district should either have been omitted completely from the itinerary of the tour, or, having been included, the programme should have been adhered to. There may, of course, be paramount considerations of which I am ignorant, but in the absence of such considerations it is difficult to see how His Majesty's failure to keep to his programme can be satisfactorily explained to the local inhabitants, and the Kurds will not be slow to interpret the cause as fear for the personal safety of the King.

5. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Embassy.

I have, &c.

F. C. OGDEN.

[E 4600/4600/93]

No. 51.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received July 17.)*

(No. 375.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, July 4, 1934.*

THE customary observance, on the 20th June, of the Prophet's birthday, contained features this year which appear worthy of comment.

2. The celebrations in Bagdad were conducted on a more extensive and elaborate scale than usual, and the speeches made in the mosques and elsewhere show that the anniversary has taken on a new significance.

3. Instead of the time-honoured and fantastic recitals of the Prophet's miraculous feats, embellished by descriptions of his angelic physical grace, long, well-prepared speeches were delivered, dilating upon his character, and those of his attributes and qualities that enabled him and his early successors to build up a vast empire.

4. These speeches appear to have been designed as exhortations to the Arab Moslems to regain their place in the sun by awakening in them a new sense of their pristine glories.

5. I understand that the changes in the nature and extent of the celebrations have been made at the instance of the Government (with little or no encouragement from religious quarters) in order to emphasise the Moslem character of the State of Iraq.

I have, &c.

(For His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires).

C. H. BATEMAN.



[E 4691/197/34]

No. 52.

*Sir John Simon to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes.*

(No. 511.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, July 30, 1934.*

AS foreshadowed in my telegram No. 135 of the 20th July, I desire to inform you more fully of the result of a recent re-examination in my department of the question of the Perso-Iraq frontier, which was undertaken on the receipt of a request for advice on this matter, made orally on the 16th June, by the Iraqi Minister, on the instructions of his Government. A copy of the reply returned to General Jafar Pasha El Askeri was transmitted to you in my despatch No. 465 of the 10th July.

2. In conveying his Government's request, General Jafar Pasha referred to the serious violations of the Perso-Iraqi frontier which the Persians had been committing for some time past, and also to the Persian Government's renewed and categorical official statement that they could not recognise the validity of the Turco-Persian frontier delimitation of 1913-14, on which the Iraqi Government, as successors of the Ottoman Government, took their stand. Jafar Pasha quoted from the Arabic documents, translations of which were enclosed in your despatch No. 303 of the 30th May, and from a record of an interview between Dr. Damluji and the Persian Minister at Bagdad on the 15th May, a translation of which is enclosed herein. Jafar Pasha added further that the Iraqi Government had been disturbed by the information which they had received from Tehran regarding the possibility that some Turco-Persian agreement would be concluded during the Shah's visit to Angora which would adversely affect Iraq. On this point Jafar Pasha was informed that His Majesty's Government had no information to indicate the subjects which would be discussed during this visit, but that any information on this subject likely to be of interest to the Iraqi Government would be communicated to him.

3. As you will now be aware, His Majesty's Ambassador at Angora has received spontaneous assurances from the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs to the effect that no special agreements were under discussion during the visit of the Shah to Turkey, and it appears from the available information that, although the Turkish Government are inclined to sympathise with the Persian Government's grievances regarding the Perso-Iraqi frontier, and apparently profess (see your despatch No. 336 of the 16th June) to regard the frontier delimited by the Delimitation Commission in 1913-14 as not having become definitive, they are unlikely to afford the Persian Government any active support in the matter. When, therefore, the Iraqi Minister called again on the 3rd July to ask for a reply, and in particular to enquire whether His Majesty's Government had any information regarding the reported conclusion of a Turco-Persian military alliance, he was informed that His Majesty's Government had no reason to believe that any such agreement had been made, or that the Turkish Government were not prepared to act with perfect correctness towards the Iraqi Government.

4. His Majesty's Government have, in the past, examined the question of the validity of the Turco-Persian frontier delimitation of 1913-14, and have concluded that it should be regarded as valid as against Persia. The point has now been re-examined with reference to the Iraqi Government's present enquiry, and there appears to be no reason to revise the opinion held hitherto. A recent point which is relevant in this connexion is that when Iraq was admitted to the League of Nations and the question was examined whether the necessary condition of admission that she should have fixed frontiers was fulfilled, the validity of the 1913-14 frontier was not called in question by Persia, who was a member of the League at the time, or by any other member. I am advised, therefore, that if the Iraqi Government were to appeal to the Council of the League of Nations in the matter, their case would be strong. In this connexion, you will have observed from my telegram No. 136 of the 21st July that, in my opinion, the work of the Frontier Delimitation Commission of 1913-14, in respect of the demarcation of the part of the then Turco-Persian frontier to which Iraq has now succeeded, having been completed, became at once definitive and binding under article 5 of the protocol signed on the 17th November, 1913, and that no weight can therefore be attached to the contention of the Turkish Government

reported in your despatch No. 336 of the 16th June that the minutes of the commission never acquired validity owing to the interruption of the work of the commission as a result of the general mobilisation in Turkey.

5. In examining this question I have thought it desirable to consider two further points on which the Iraqi Government may seek the opinion of His Majesty's Government, namely (a) whether His Majesty's Government would be prepared to give diplomatic support to the Iraqi Government in their discussion of this question with the Persian Government; (b) whether, if the necessity arose, His Majesty's Government should recommend Iraq to appeal to the Council of the League of Nations in respect of the refusal of the Persian Government to recognise the frontier as laid down in 1914. It will be necessary to consult other departments of His Majesty's Government in regard to these questions. Pending such consultation my provisional views are as follows, and I shall be glad to learn whether you have any observations to offer thereon:—

6. Although His Majesty's Government could scarcely refuse, if necessary, to support Iraqi complaints against the Persian attitude at Tehran, it is open to doubt whether such support would, in fact, advance the Iraqi cause, since in the present state of Anglo-Persian relations, the Persian Government are unlikely to be favourably influenced by any desire to be friendly towards His Majesty's Government. On the other hand, His Majesty's Government could scarcely decline to support the Iraqi Government in this matter on the ground that their intervention might be ineffective. If they should wish to intervene they would undoubtedly have an adequate *locus standi* in the matter, as one of the four parties to the 1913-14 frontier delimitation agreement which the Persian Government have now officially stated that they do not recognise, and their intervention would also be in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Alliance with Iraq, articles 3 and 4 of which give them a direct interest in this question. It is even possible that the assistance of His Majesty's Government in a matter of this kind might modify the apparent tendency of the Iraqi Government to regard the Treaty of Alliance as a one-sided instrument from which they derive no benefit.

7. As regards the question of an eventual appeal by Iraq to the Council of the League, I consider that, having regard to the strength of her case, it may well be desirable for her to lodge such an appeal in order to establish the legal validity of the 1914 frontier, should the Persian Government continue to display an intransigent attitude. On the other hand, the facts that Iraq has not control over the whole of the Rooka Channel and that Persia possesses sovereignty over the waters of the Shatt-el-Arab up to the *medium filum aquae* (or at least up to the thalweg) at and above the junction of the Karun, and thus has it in her power at the present time, by obstructiveness or non-co-operation, without any violation of Iraqi rights, to render the waterway of the river impassable, are strong arguments in favour of Iraq's attempting, in her own interest, to reach some friendly settlement with Persia. If such a settlement could be reached it would clearly be greatly preferable, from Iraq's point of view, to the indefinite continuance of the situation of acute friction and of continued Persian obstructiveness and hostility. Apart from all other considerations it would clearly be a tactical mistake for Iraq to retreat from the position that the present frontier on the Shatt-el-Arab is legally unassailable. It may well be, however, that it would be better tactics, should Persia show any willingness to reach an accommodation in this question, for the Iraqi Government, while in no way weakening in regard to their legal position, to begin by again urging the Persian Government to accept the proposed Conservancy Board Convention. Should Persia refuse these overtures, it would still be open for Iraq to appeal to the Council of the League. On the other hand, there may be certain advantages, should Persian obstructiveness continue, in Iraq concentrating, in the first place, in establishing her legal rights and waiting to revive the project for a Conservancy Board Convention when those rights have been finally established and recognised. It is clearly for the Iraqi Government themselves to decide which of these lines of action to pursue in the light of the circumstances existing at the time.

8. A copy of this despatch is being sent to His Majesty's Ambassador at Angora.

I have, &amp;c.

JOHN SIMON.

[11508]

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Enclosure in No. 52.

*Interview between the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Persian Minister in Bagdad, on May 15, 1934.*

(Translation.)

*Persian Minister:* In your letter dated the 8th May, 1934, you mention that the Persian Government is arming the tribes, and a few troublesome persons, against Iraq; I request some explanations as to this statement.

*Foreign Minister:* I have explained to you in my previous correspondence all these points, and, as you know, the Persian Government has stated on many occasions that the Persian tribes are entirely without fire-arms, but the providing of the above-mentioned tribes with arms and the enlistment of several notorious brigands who were known to have committed many crimes in Iraqi territory, and whose surrender to the Iraqi Government has been demanded from the Persian Government, has been neglected for many years.

These tribes and the enlisted criminals violate the Iraqi frontier, and have committed many robberies, and the continued violation of the frontier by these tribes does not correspond with the friendly relations of the two neighbouring countries.

*Persian Minister:* I do not know anything regarding the violations of the frontier which you mention, but it appears to me that the Persian authorities have decided to suppress the rebellious parties by the formation of small well-affected bodies of tribesmen to counteract their activities, and if the Persian Government has supplied these friendly tribesmen with arms, this action has been taken with the intention of imposing necessary precautions to secure Persia's own internal peace, and with no intention of the violation of Iraqi territory.

If among these enlisted tribesmen there should be any criminal whose delivery has been demanded by the Iraqi Government, I will write to Tehran requesting an investigation of the matter, the result of which I will inform you.

*Foreign Minister:* Whatever precautions and measures the Persian Government may take in its own territory does not concern us; what is of real importance to the Iraqi Government is that there should be no breach of the peace in its territory, and that there should be no delay in meeting its demands regarding the handing over of the criminals who have committed crime in Iraqi territory.

*Persian Minister:* I will report this question to the Government of Tehran and request them to enlighten me in the matter and will also draw their attention to the Iraqi demands regarding the criminals in question, and as to its fulfilment.

Following this discussion the Persian Minister referred to the debate in the Iraqi Parliament regarding the waters of Mandali and the Persian frontier posts which were built within the Iraqi territory, and the confirmation by the Government of these facts, and said that this will cause unrest in Iraqi public opinion, and he requested me to ameliorate these statements in a convenient form.

*Foreign Minister:* I have asked the Persian Minister whether he has received the details of the debate regarding these points, and the degree of regret shown by the members of the Iraqi Parliament, and his answer was that no details have reached him beyond those published in the local press. Whereupon I informed him that the Iraqi Government's answer in Parliament was in favour of the Persian Government, and that we have satisfied the members and reassured them that the correspondence is proceeding, and we promise the Parliament that all steps are being taken to safeguard Iraqi rights within the limits of the existing conventions and promises given.

*Persian Minister:* I have already informed you that the Persian Government has requested that sufficient evidence be given to prove that they have trespassed on Iraqi territory, and built posts there, and I must emphasise that the Persian Government has no intention whatever of violating the Iraqi frontier, but their object is to ascertain whether such a violation has actually taken place, and if so they will certainly take all necessary steps to remove such posts and prevent any future action of this nature, as has happened in the case of Jia Surkh, in Khanikin.

*Finance Minister:* This Ministry has explained to the Persian Government through the Iraqi Legation in Tehran and given sufficient evidence to prove the violation of the frontier and the building of posts within the territory of Amarah Liwa. The evidence in question was supported by a report given by a military mission, which was sent to investigate on the spot, in accordance with the Turkish-Persian Frontier Protocol and with the minutes of the meetings of the Frontier Commission of 1914, also we have suggested that a mixed committee should investigate the violation.

*Persian Minister:* I welcome the formation of a mixed committee to investigate the violation regarding the known frontiers of the two countries, the Persian Government being quite willing to investigate the situation, and if it is proved that a violation has taken place, to remove it, and in this connexion I will explain to you that the Persian Government has already declared that it does not recognise the Frontier Protocol of 1913.

As regards the Mandali waters, I assure you that they were not completely cut off, and the Persian Government sympathises with the justified Mandali demands, and declares that there is no intention whatsoever of cutting off these waters. As regards the kahrizes (subterranean waters) as long as the protocol is considered your guide, Mandali has no right to these kahrizes.

*Foreign Minister:* I wish to draw your attention to the fact that Persia cannot make use of these kahrizes as they flow underground, and by cutting them off no good can ensue, but on the contrary this would cause damage to the people of Mandali.

*Persian Minister:* I agree with you in this regard and assure you that Mandali will receive all the water of which she is in need.

*Foreign Minister:* I thank you for what you say of the willingness of the Persian Government to remove any violation on Iraqi territory, after investigation, but here I must refer to your mention of not recognising the protocol, as this obliges me again to inform you that the Iraqi Government follows this protocol and the minutes of the meetings regarding the frontier, and I have already sent a memorandum to the Persian Government through our legation in Tehran explaining that the protocol is the definitely recognised text, and we have also explained to the Persian Government the readiness of the Iraqi Government to negotiate for the final limitation of the frontier on condition that the negotiations will not affect the sovereignty of the Iraqi Government in any part of her territory, in accordance with the limitation aforesaid, and it is possible to resolve the administration difficulties in an agreeable manner. I assure your Excellency that our desire is to reopen the negotiations in order to reach a suitable solution to all these pending administrative difficulties.

*Persian Minister:* I thank you for all you have said, and would like to be informed of the memorandum which has been sent to the Persian Government. I wish to mention in this connexion my personal endeavours to bring together the interests of both countries, on which subject I have written many reports to my Government in Tehran, and I have great hopes of an understanding being reached between the two countries.

*Foreign Minister:* We certainly appreciate your endeavours, and give great importance to them and I have in my portfolio several draft conventions which we intend to propose to the Persian Government. I am awaiting their answer to begin negotiations on the basis which I have already exposed to you.

Upon this the interview closed, and I sent to the Persian Minister a copy of the memorandum which we have sent to the Persian Government concerning the frontier protocol.

From the above we realise that the Persian Minister has been instructed by his Government to show leniency towards our pending reclamations, and although we do not give great importance to this interview, yet it might be taken as a beginning of a settlement of the existing difficulties between the two countries.

ABDULLAH DEMLOUJI



[E 5089/197/34]

No. 53.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received August 17.)*

(No. 422.)

HIS Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Bagdad presents his compliments to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit to him copy of his letter to the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs, dated the 24th July, respecting the Turco-Persian-Iraqi frontier.

*Bagdad, July 24, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 53.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs.*

(No. 409. Confidential.)

My dear Minister,

*Bagdad, July 24, 1934.*

IN a confidential letter No. 873/C, which he was so good as to address to me on the 7th June last, your predecessor enclosed a copy of a communication from the Turkish Ministry for Foreign Affairs to the Royal Iraqi Legation in Angora, in which they put forward the view that the minutes of the Turco-Persian Frontier Demarcation Commission of 1914 had no official nature owing to the interruption of the commission's work by the war.

2. In my reply, I informed Dr. Damluji that I was drawing the attention of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to the attitude of the Turkish Government in this matter. I am now in possession of the views of His Majesty's Government.

3. His Majesty's Government consider that the view put forward by the Turkish Ministry for Foreign Affairs is untenable. Article V of the protocol signed on behalf of the British, Turkish, Russian and Persian Governments on the 17th November, 1913, stipulated that as soon as any part of the frontier should have been delimited, that part should be considered as definitely fixed and should not be liable to further examination or alteration. The minutes of the Frontier Delimitation Commission show that delimitation and demarcation were completed on the 26th October, 1914, from Fao to Ararat with the exception of the Kotur district, which is on the present Turco-Persian frontier. Further discussion regarding the frontier in this district was prevented by the outbreak of the war, but all four commissioners signed a detailed description of the rest of the frontier.

4. Your Excellency will observe from the above that the delimitation of that part of the Turco-Persian frontier which now forms the frontier between Iraq and Persia was completed before the work of the commission was interrupted. In the view of His Majesty's Government, that part of the frontier accordingly became definitive and binding under article V of the protocol referred to above.

Yours, &amp;c.

G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

[E 5370/1/93]

No. 54.

## MEMORANDUM ON THE ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

THIS memorandum is an attempt, without going into complicated details, to describe the main lines on which the Assyrian question has developed.

2. It is commonly stated that the Assyrians have a special claim upon Great Britain because they fought side by side with British forces as allies in the Great War, which they were encouraged to enter on the strength of British promises. This is quite inaccurate.

3. The Assyrians—or Nestorians as it would be more correct to call them, since they are a Church rather than a people—lived before the war partly on the shores of Lake Urmia in Persia, but mostly in the highlands of Turkish Kurdistan. At the outbreak of war the Assyrians in Turkey were identified with Russia owing to their relations with the Orthodox Church, and in 1915, at

the instigation of the Russians, they rose against the Turks and joined Russian forces which were advancing into Turkey. When shortly afterwards the Russians retired, the position of the Assyrians became untenable, and they were forced to withdraw to Persian territory, where they continued to assist the Russians until the break-up of the Tsarist régime in 1917. They were then obliged to retire before the attacks of Turks, Kurds and Persians, and only avoided destruction by seeking shelter in territory occupied by British forces, under whose ægis they were eventually brought into Iraq.

4. It is sometimes asserted that, before this retreat, but after the breakdown of the Russians, the Assyrians were promised by a British officer, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, eventual independence, or at least permanent British protection. This is untrue. The officer in question has denied that he gave any such pledge, which in any case he had no authority to give.

5. So far from Great Britain having brought the Assyrians into the war and assumed responsibility for their future, the part played by this country was as stated in a recent article in the *Morning Post*, to "rescue them (i.e., the Assyrians) from complete annihilation, and to help them for humanitarian motives over a considerable period and at some expense." For three years, in fact, the refugee Assyrians were housed and fed in camps in Iraq at an expense to His Majesty's Government of several million pounds.

6. After the war Great Britain naturally wished to do her best for these unfortunate people. They desired to return to their former homes in Persia and in Turkey, and Great Britain did her best to facilitate this. The Treaty of Sévres provided for the eventual establishment of an autonomous Kurdish area north of Iraq, in which there should be full safeguards for the protection of the Assyrians and other racial and religious minorities. But the Treaty of Sévres never entered into force, and by the time peace was eventually concluded with Turkey at Lausanne, the regeneration of Turkey had entirely altered the situation. Meanwhile, the bulk of the ex-Ottoman Assyrians had, in fact, returned to their homelands in the Hakkari district of Turkey (just north of the present Turco-Iraqi frontier), and there seemed reason to believe that the Assyrian problem would solve itself in this way. Unfortunately, however, in 1924, following an attack by the Assyrians on the new Turkish Vali of Hakkari, the Assyrians who had returned there were driven once more into Iraq, and the whole problem of their settlement had again to be faced.

7. The Assyrians still desired to be established in the Hakkari territory under a British protectorate. His Majesty's Government could not contemplate so serious an extension of their responsibility as to assume a protectorate in that remote district, but in order to try to meet the aspirations of the Assyrians, they aimed in the peace settlement with Turkey at the incorporation within Iraqi territory of the Hakkari district, so that the Assyrians might be established there as an autonomous community under the sovereignty of Iraq.

8. The Treaty of Lausanne left the Turco-Iraqi frontier for future settlement by friendly agreement between Great Britain and Turkey, if possible, and otherwise by the Council of the League of Nations. It was on the point of the inclusion of the Hakkari territory in Iraq that the subsequent Anglo-Turkish negotiations at Constantinople broke down. When the matter consequently came before the Council of the League in 1925, His Majesty's Government made it abundantly clear that, unless the Hakkari territory were included within Iraq, hopes of a separate and homogeneous existence for the Assyrians would be destroyed, as it would be impossible to find in Iraq suitable territories for the settlement of the Assyrians as a compact and organised community. The Council of the League, unfortunately, in spite of this consideration and of the pleadings of His Majesty's Government, decided that the Hakkari territory must remain Turkish.

9. This unfortunate decision, which finally separated some 20,000 Assyrians from their original homes, lies at the root of the present Assyrian problem. Suitable land might have been found in Iraq for those Assyrians whose pre-war homes were within what is now Iraq, but land could not be found for the compact settlement of those Assyrians who came from Hakkari also, without the wholesale dispossession of Kurdish landowners. The difficulties of settlement were enhanced by the fact that Iraqis, not unnaturally, regarded the Assyrians as an alien race, having no claim to their special consideration; while the Assyrians never concealed their hatred and suspicion of an Arab Government, expected a



special privileged position, and were difficult to please in the matter of land. In spite of all this, good progress was made from 1925 onwards with the work of settling the Assyrians in suitable villages in Iraqi Kurdistan. The Assyrians also received generous treatment from the Iraqi Government in the matter of special exemption from taxation. By 1930 there remained only some 300 families for whom suitable land has not been found; and there seemed every reason to hope that resettlement would be completed, either before the entry of Iraq into the League or shortly afterwards.

10. It may be mentioned in passing that employment for the Assyrians was found to an increasing extent by His Majesty's Government in the Iraq levies—a British military auxiliary force which still exists and acts as guards for the British aerodromes in Iraq. The force was in its origin entirely composed of Arabs and Kurds. At the present time five companies out of eight are Assyrian. The Assyrians have rendered excellent service, and this is one reason why His Majesty's Government have a great interest in the satisfactory solution of the Assyrian problem. Without wishing to belittle this fact or detract in any way from the service of the Assyrians, it may be pointed out that their enlistment was primarily due to a desire to find employment for them, and the good pay which they have received has been a powerful factor in the prosperity of the Assyrians in Iraq.

11. As the termination of the mandatory régime in Iraq approached, the Assyrians became more and more apprehensive regarding their eventual position in Iraq. The Assyrian leaders, unwilling to face unpalatable facts, continued to hope for national autonomy; whereas Iraq depended for its existence as a nation on the welding together of the various racial and religious entities of which it was composed, and could not be expected to allow an Assyrian *imperium in imperio*. The Assyrians were unfortunately encouraged by irresponsible propagandists, and a number of petitions were submitted on their behalf to the League of Nations, culminating in 1931 in a demand for the establishment of an autonomous enclave. This was rejected by the League Council on the recommendation of the Permanent Mandates Commission, at whose instance the Council had previously caused the petitioners to be informed that the League would continue to protect their rights with greater zeal and sympathy, if it were convinced that they were loyally contributing to the security and prosperity of the State of Iraq.

12. The League Council proceeded to negotiate with the Iraqi Government the terms of certain guarantees to be given by the latter to the Council as a condition of the termination of the mandatory régime. In May 1932, these guarantees, after approval by the Council, were embodied in a declaration by the Iraqi Government. They were designed to safeguard the cultural, linguistic and religious aspirations of all the racial and religious minorities in Iraq, including the Assyrians.

13. The hope that these guarantees would reconcile the Assyrians to equal citizenship within the Iraqi State was doomed to disappointment. In June 1932, under a threat that the Assyrian levies would terminate their services, a petition was submitted by the Assyrian leaders, containing, *inter alia*, a demand for administrative autonomy. The levies were persuaded to continue their service until the League had adjudicated upon this petition, and His Majesty's Government did their best to get it considered before the termination of the mandatory régime, together with other petitions which suggested the advisability of removing the Assyrians to some other country. Unfortunately the constitutional procedure of the League rendered it impossible for the petitions to be dealt with before the mandatory régime came to an end with the admission of Iraq to membership of the League (the 3rd October, 1932); but they were dealt with subsequently by the Council as a special case. They were referred in the first place to the Permanent Mandates Commission, which took the view that the demand of the Assyrians for administrative autonomy within Iraq could not be accepted, but considered that the question of land settlement within Iraq lay at the root of the whole Assyrian problem. In a resolution of the 15th December, 1932, the Council of the League endorsed the view of the Permanent Mandates Commission as regards autonomy, and took note of the intention of the Iraqi Government to appoint a foreign expert to assist in carrying out the settlement of landless Assyrians in Iraq under suitable conditions, and as far as possible in homogeneous units, it being understood

that the rights of the existing population should not be prejudiced. The Council concluded its resolution by expressing confidence that if these measures did not provide a complete solution of the problem, and there remained Assyrians unwilling or unable to settle in Iraq, the Iraqi Government would take all possible measures to facilitate the settlement of such Assyrians elsewhere.

14. The interests of the Assyrians were thus not only provided for in the same way as those of the other (and far more numerous) Christian and other minorities in Iraq by the Iraqi Declaration of Guarantees, but their special needs were also taken into account by the Council's resolution of the 15th December, 1932. On the assumption that they were prepared to accept the same position as the other minorities in Iraq, they were thus amply safeguarded. Unfortunately, this assumption proved ill-founded.

15. The Iraqi Government must be given credit for having done their best to carry out the Council's resolution of the 15th December, 1932, in the matter of settlement. A British officer, Major Thomson, was appointed as expert, and a settlement committee was set up to help him. The necessary financial provision was made, and irrigation engineers were sent out to inspect proposed sites. Unfortunately, the Council's resolution appears never to have been loyally accepted by the Mar Shimun, who showed uncompromising opposition to the work of settlement, and continued to press for the establishment of the Assyrians as a compact national group, with himself as its spiritual and secular head. This attitude encouraged extremists on the other side, and the atmosphere became tense and embittered.

16. While efforts were being made to overcome the difficulties by means of discussions in Bagdad between the Mar Shimun and members of the Iraqi Government, and before Major Thomson had time to formulate definite settlement proposals, some 1,400 armed Assyrian men belonging to the tribes most closely associated with the Patriarch took the extraordinary course of leaving their women and children unprotected in the villages and migrating in a body to Syria, without any prior arrangement with either the Iraqi or Syrian authorities. Whether this amazing exodus was intended as a kind of demonstration, with a view to forcing the hands of the Iraqi Government, or whether its object was to find a new home in Syria, is uncertain. No action could, however, have been more ill-timed or ill-judged. The migrating Assyrians were not allowed by the French to proceed far into Syria, and, on the 4th August, they recrossed the Tigris into Iraq with their arms, and became involved in fighting with Iraqi troops. The exact circumstances are even now difficult to determine, but a serious engagement was followed by massacres of Assyrians and the looting of a number of Assyrian villages. The situation got thoroughly out of hand, and deplorable excesses were committed by the Iraqi troops, notably at the village of Simel.

17. The Mar Shimun was suspected by the Iraqi Government of complicity in the events leading up to the fighting, was deported by them, with his immediate dependents, in August 1933. This course was adopted, to some considerable extent, in his own interests; and, in order to facilitate matters for both parties, His Majesty's Government found a temporary home for the patriarchal party in Cyprus. The Mar Shimun was eventually allowed to proceed to Geneva, where the Assyrian question, as a result of the above events, came before the Council of the League in October 1933.

18. The Council had before it various petitions from the Mar Shimun drawing its attention to what had happened and claiming that the Iraqi Government had violated the Declaration of Guarantees. The Iraqi Government on their side claimed that the fighting was the culmination of an Assyrian campaign of disobedience and brought out the great difficulties caused by the non-co-operation of the Assyrian leaders in the land settlement work. At the same time, they admitted and deplored the excesses which had been committed by the Iraqi troops once fighting had been started, and declared their intention of leaving nothing undone to ensure that there should be no repetition of these unfortunate events. They felt, however, that the necessity foreseen in the Council's resolution of the 15th December, 1932, of attempting to settle outside Iraq those Assyrians who wished to leave the country had arisen, and they asked for the assistance of the League in finding suitable lands for this purpose, adding that they were prepared to make as generous a contribution as their resources permitted to help the Assyrians on their way.



19. The Council of the League took the view that what had happened was so confused and complicated that it was impossible to form an accurate idea on which to base an estimate of the respective responsibility of the parties and that the only course was to seek an honourable and lasting solution for the future. The Council decided that in dealing with so exceptional a situation exceptional measures must be adopted. The solution proposed by the Iraqi Government evidently corresponded with the wishes of a large section of the Assyrian community itself and the Council therefore decided to facilitate it. For this purpose it set up a committee of its members whose main task was to consider the practicability of settlement outside Iraq and, if such a solution were found practicable, to take all necessary steps to prepare and put into execution a detailed scheme. The Council expressed the hope that, until it had been possible to put into effect the arrangements contemplated, the Iraqi Government would keep the committee regularly informed of the measures taken to assure the safety of the Assyrians in Iraq, to assist the families left destitute in consequence of the events of August 1933 and to rebuild those villages which had been wholly or partly destroyed through those events.

20. The committee, which was composed of representatives of Spain (president), the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Denmark, and Mexico, began this task at once and has energetically endeavoured to find a destination for the Assyrians. Its task is, however, no easy one, in view of the unfavourable economic and social conditions generally prevalent throughout the world. To quote one of its reports to the Council it "felt bound to explore a wide field and there is no continent in the world in which it has not considered possibilities." It seemed likely for some time that a successful scheme for settlement in the State of Paraná in Brazil would be worked out, but this plan unfortunately broke down at the beginning of June last owing to new immigration legislation of a restrictive nature passed by the Brazilian Constituent Assembly.

21. The Council of the League considered the situation again on the 8th June, 1934. It then requested its committee to make a further effort to find a destination elsewhere and urged Governments, to which the committee might address appeals, to give them favourable consideration and to facilitate the committee's task in view of the great importance of the problem.

22. In pursuance of this decision, the committee at once addressed fresh appeals to some thirteen or fourteen Governments, by whom the matter is still being considered. In the light of their replies, the committee hopes to be in a position to present a further report on the prospects of settlement to the Council at its forthcoming meeting in September.

23. Meanwhile, the Assyrians in Iraq are of course living a makeshift life, and the committee is fully alive to the necessity, from that point of view, of an urgent solution. Some 1,500 persons, mostly women and children, who were rendered destitute by the events of last August are still being maintained by the Iraqi Government in a refugee camp in Mosul, administered by the Settlement Officer, Major Thomson. Of the rest, while some have never left the villages which they were occupying when the trouble broke out last year, others fled at the time to Mosul and for the most part are still living there, mainly on the charity of their relatives and friends. Attempts have been made by a committee under Major Thomson's presidency (set up by the Iraqi Government in agreement with the Council Committee) to explain the situation to them and to induce them to resume their normal life pending emigration. The Council Committee in April of this year addressed a message to them in the same sense through the Iraqi Government; but these attempts have been of little avail.

24. In accordance with the Council's request in October last, the Iraqi Government have furnished the Council Committee with periodical reports on the situation of the Assyrians. These have been carefully scrutinised by the committee and the Iraqi Government have been asked for further information on any doubtful points. Moreover, formal undertakings on behalf of the Iraqi Government have been repeatedly given, both to the Committee of the Council and to the Council itself, not only to guarantee the security of the Assyrians, but to succour them and provide for their welfare during the whole of the time they may still have to remain in Iraq.

August 25, 1934.

[E 5711/1/93]

No. 55.

*Officer Administering the Government of British Guiana to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.—(Communicated to Foreign Office September 5.)*

(Confidential.)

Government House,

British Guiana, August 20, 1934.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your confidential despatch of the 13th July on the subject of settling in British Guiana Assyrians at present living in Iraq, and to refer to the confidential telegrams which have been exchanged in this connexion.

2. I regard it as a fortunate circumstance that the suggestion to settle these people in Brazil has fallen through, as, *prima facie*, the prospects of the settlement of them in British Guiana are favourable. Moreover, the settlement of an agricultural and pastoral community of considerable numbers in the Rupununi savannahs will supply a population which this area of the colony urgently needs; there are no serious objections to such a settlement and I am satisfied that these people will be welcomed by the community as a whole.

3. The area suggested in the Rupununi district upon which these people could be settled and which is indicated on the enclosed map<sup>(1)</sup> has an area of 13,110 square miles, bounded as follows:—

On the north by latitude 5° north; on the east by longitude 59° west to latitude 4° north, thence along that latitude to the Rupununi River, thence along the Rupununi, Rewa and Kwitaro Rivers and longitude 59° west to the intersection with latitude 2° north; and on the west by the Brazilian boundary.

This area is 5,000 square miles larger than Wales and three times as large as Jamaica, and is sufficiently large to accommodate the number who are likely voluntarily to leave Iraq.

Of this area 7,875 square miles comprise forest, 4,380 square miles open savannahs, and 855 square miles Indian reservations, which last-named will have to be preserved and excluded from areas available for settlement.

The remaining area of 12,255 square miles should easily be capable of accommodating 12,000 settlers and, to meet requirements of two groups, can conveniently be divided into two portions, north and south respectively, of approximately latitude 4° north, each portion containing proportionate areas of savannah and forest land.

No difficulty should arise in regard to Indian reserves, which have been duly proclaimed and are well defined and so situated as not to present, so far as can be foreseen, any likelihood of disturbance of Indians by settlement of Assyrians in the adjoining areas.

4. It might be possible to find other areas, but these would probably be densely forested, involving considerable time and cost in selection and clearing. In this connexion the western portion of the north-western district, which is hilly and well-watered, suggests itself, but is entirely forest-covered.

5. The savannah area in the Rupununi district is of a mean height of 300 feet above sea level, rising in the mountainous portions—the Pakaraima and Kanuku Mountains—to a height of 2,000 to 3,000 feet above sea level.

The river valleys in these mountains should be especially suitable for settlement, these having more fertile soils than the savannahs and many rivers and streams giving an ample supply of potable water all the year round.

In the open savannah itself are rivers and creeks which, when they dry up, leave ponds—and indications are that additional water can probably be obtained by boring shallow wells. Two ranchers have such wells, equipped with windmill pumps, which I understand have never failed to give an adequate supply of water for domestic and irrigation purposes.

The average rainfall over the area is 55–80 inches, two distinct seasons occurring, the wet from May to August and the dry from September to April.

The temperature range is small—from 71·5° F. minimum to 91·9° F. maximum.

<sup>(1)</sup> See No. 61.



6. The reports available as to the agricultural possibility of the district based on examination of soil samples alone are not sufficiently comprehensive for a definite opinion to be given, and too much stress should not be laid upon them. Sir John Harrison's report of 1925 showed seven samples to be "fluvial or riparian soils of the colony characterised by well-marked potential fertility. If properly drained and skilfully cultivated these soils should yield satisfactory crops of many tropical agricultural products." His report on certain other of the samples was undoubtedly unfavourable.

Mr. Follett-Smith in his report (1931) states that it does not appear that a sample typical of the soil of the Rupununi has been sent for analysis.

It appears, therefore, as is usually the case when one officer collects the samples and another examines them, that there is considerable doubt as to whether most of the soil samples are truly representative of the Rupununi.

I enclose reports, as set out in the enclosed schedule, on the potentialities of the district, and the reports of those who know the district well and who, I consider, are well able to form an opinion appear to indicate that there should be no difficulty in the settlers being able to grow sufficient food-stuffs for their requirements if settlement is carried out on the basis of small holdings. This can, I think, be regarded as the only doubt, although a serious one, as to the area being suitable, and this is one which can be dispelled only by a closer examination of the agricultural possibilities of the district. The responsibility for a decision must rest on those who, being fully acquainted with the requirements of the settlers, make a tour through the proposed area of settlement.

7. With regard to the reported phosphatic deficiencies in the district, the surgeon-general, according to available reports, suggests that, in the ordinary food consumed by the people in the district, vitamin B is lacking, i.e., the "accessory substance" which exists in yeast and is present in varying amounts in all natural foods, and is necessary for growth. Diet will require to include provision of such articles as bread (whole-meal), cheese, eggs, fish meats, milk, potatoes, apples, bananas, grape fruit, oranges, pineapples, vegetables, cabbages, carrots, onions, tomatoes, turnips, &c.

8. If, in the light of an actual examination of the area, with particular reference to its agricultural possibilities and the route by which it is proposed to transport these people to the district and the permanent line of communication with the coast (which need not be the same as the route by which they are taken to the area), its possibilities are regarded as being favourable, there is no reason why such arrangements should not be made as will enable the first party to arrive not later than January next.

In this connexion, it would be well to note that before arriving in the colony settlers should be vaccinated against smallpox. It may also be advisable that they should be inoculated against the enterica.

9. I note that it is intended that no cost will fall upon the Colonial Government in regard to any scheme of settlement until such time as the new community is fully established and is in a position to take its share as an integral part of the population of the colony in contributing by way of taxation and otherwise to the general revenue.

It is presumed also that the colony will receive assistance towards the establishment and maintenance of social services, such as medical, agricultural, veterinary, schools, hospitals and dispensaries, police and prisons, as it is highly improbable that the settlers themselves will be in a position for some years to meet the cost of these services. The provision for the usual administrative and social services should present no difficulty, especially if with the Assyrians there come medical men, clerks, &c., while the former members of the levies may well form the nucleus of a police force.

The suggestion that the administration of the area and of the settlers should form an integral part of the district administration scheme of the colony would present no difficulty, and would, I think, be the best and less costly method to adopt.

I enclose an estimate of the cost of district administration. The senior members of the staff should, I consider, be of pure European descent, the junior ranks being recruited from among the Assyrians themselves.

10. With the information at my disposal at present it is not easy to estimate the exact cost of settling a family of, say, five persons, but, exclusive of ocean transport, I consider that it should not exceed £80 in the first year, this estimate

including the building of temporary housing accommodation for each family. After this year the settlers will still have to be maintained to a certain extent for a period of about two years, during which time they will be becoming more and more self-supporting.

An estimate of the cost of maintenance for these two years can be obtained from the cost of the usual Government weekly ration, which consists of 1 lb. salt beef, 7 pints of flour,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  pints of peas, 1 lb. of pork, 7 sticks of chocolate, 2 lb. of sugar, 1 lb. of salt fish,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  pints of rice, and 1 lb. of biscuits. The cost per individual per day of this ration at contract rates in Georgetown is about 13 cents, whilst repacking and transport costs, wastage, &c., on long river journeys, make the final cost double or treble that amount. If the settlers possess cattle and catch fish, which abound in the rivers, the ration should not cost more than 20 cents per man per day, and allowing four rations as sufficient for a family of five persons, some of whom will be children, the cost of food per annum per family will be approximately 292 dollars, or, say, £61, for the first year, and half that amount for the second year, when ground provisions, rice and other quick-growing food-stuffs become available in the district. If the above ration is not suitable for the Assyrians, it could, of course, be varied to suit their taste.

11. With regard to supplying the settlers with a nucleus of cattle and sheep, I would refer to my telegram under reference, and to subsequent telegrams in which I stated that I regard it as essential that the assets of the Rupununi Development Company in the district should be acquired—lock, stock and barrel. These assets consist of large numbers of cattle (estimated at 47,000 head), a considerable number of horses, also houses and other buildings, which latter could readily be adapted for the use of officers placed in charge of the settlers and these homesteads could form centres around which to settle families in groups. The leases and permissions at present held by the company would be cancelled when the other assets are purchased.

It may also be considered desirable to purchase from ranchers at present established in the district some of their better cattle. This should not present any difficulty and the possession of this stock for immediate distribution to settlers would be a matter of considerable advantage and permit of the reduction of areas at present held by the ranchers under annual grazing permissions. The cost of purchasing the assets of the Rupununi Company has been dealt with in the telegraphic correspondence referred to, and the price of breeding-stock, if further numbers are required, runs from 15s. to £1 per head, so that the total cost of acquiring the company's assets and an additional supply of cattle if necessary should be less than the estimate for the purchase of land alone under the Brazilian scheme. In this connexion one of the desirable services would be a stock-farm under the care of an experienced veterinary officer. Veterinary opinion is that the progress of cattle on the present ranches is at present retarded more by inbreeding and lack of care than by any paucity of good grazing areas, but pure-bred bulls will have to be imported, and this will be an important item in the cost of this service. The same remark applies to agriculture and considerable assistance could be given to the settlers by the establishment of an agricultural experimental station in the district. These are, however, matters which need not be decided at the moment, but the sooner the services are established the better.

12. It may safely be said, in my opinion, that a suitable area upon which to settle the number of Assyrians who are likely voluntarily to elect to come to British Guiana, is assured; and as to the welcome they will receive in the colony there can, I think, be no doubt.

13. It now remains to deal in detail with the points which have been raised in your despatch, and with several other matters, knowledge of which will facilitate settlement.

14. I should welcome, at the outset, the arrival of a pioneer party of, say, 200 to 250 young men, and included in their number should be axemen, sawyers, carpenters, mechanics, and if possible lorry-drivers, along with ordinary labourers. This party would be useful in erecting the base camps which would be necessary from which to distribute the settlers throughout the area, to erect their temporary houses and to put in order so much of the present cattle trail south of Kurupukari as will enable families to be distributed quickly and comfortably by motor-lorry. I do not think it would be wise to employ these men on work on rest camps and communications within easy reach of the coastal belt,



as there is still considerable unemployment and local labour should, I think, be employed in these initial stages and on the preliminary lines of communication as far as possible; otherwise there is certain to be criticism and an outcry against depriving local people of the means of obtaining employment, whilst there would be risk to the settlers of contracting malaria and possibly other complaints from native residents or camp followers. This would not apply when once the area assigned for the settlement of these people has been reached, and I should make it clearly understood that within that area all activities would be regarded as providing employment for the settlers.

15. With regard to the type of accommodation to which these people are accustomed, it would be of great assistance to me if I could be provided with photographs and descriptions of the style of dwelling. The local style of temporary dwelling usually adopted in the interior is well adapted to the needs of the climate and is constructed from material which is ready to hand.

16. I should also be glad to be informed of their usual necessities of life and the food-stuffs to which they are accustomed, if these differ appreciably from the Government ration on which I have based my calculations. This will facilitate arriving at a closer approximation of what it will cost to maintain a family for two years.

17. It is presumed that on leaving Iraq each person will be supplied with sufficient clothing to last for, at least, one year. Its cost, and the cost of renewal, can best be estimated by those who have knowledge of the style of clothing these people are accustomed to, but it should be noted that warm clothing is unnecessary. A hammock and a blanket for each person will be necessary—they will be better than cots, at all events until the settlers become established in their permanent homes—and each person should be equipped also with a mosquito net for use with a hammock. If necessary, these can be purchased locally of the type generally used.

18. I am definitely of the opinion that no useful purpose would be served by seeking the assistance of the Nansen Office, unless this may be a condition attending financial assistance from other nations members of the League of Nations. With British officers, with knowledge of these people, this Government with the financial assistance of His Majesty's Government can without fear assume full responsibility for the settlement of these people. If it is decided that eventually they should repay a part of cost of settlement, it is improbable that the assistance of the Nansen Organisation would be required in this connexion.

19. There is a matter, however, which should receive your consideration. I understand that the Assyrians have their own form of religion, and I anticipate that, as soon as settlement commences, a desire will be manifested by the several denominations of the Christian Church to establish missions amongst them. It would be wise to take such steps as will prevent any form of religious denominational competition arising. Anglican and Roman Catholic missions are already established in the district, and these would, no doubt, desire to extend their activities among the settlers. I mention this as a matter which should be considered, and, if necessary, such steps taken as to safeguard the settlers from the disturbing influence of contending religious denominations.

It would be well also if the numbers of the sexes could be approximately the same, and that no old or infirm people should accompany the earlier parties.

20. With regard to the routes which will be available for transporting the settlers to their destination, I referred, in my confidential telegram No. 157, to two alternative routes, which could be adopted in the first instance, and used for taking the people from the point of disembarkation from an ocean steamer to the Rupununi district. I consider that for this purpose the second alternative, namely, up the Demerara River to Canister Falls, and then by lorry along the cattle trail to Kurupukari, would be the more suitable. Ocean-going steamers can with ease be navigated to Wismar on the Demerara River, and in the vicinity of this point there would be no difficulty in establishing a camp, to which the settlers would be transferred from the steamer. The advantage of this route over the other suggested is that from Wismar to the Great Falls there are no difficult or dangerous rapids. At the Great Falls, however, it will be necessary to transfer from one system of river boats to another to avoid the half-mile portage of heavy boats around this fall. Between that and Canister Falls there are no rapids, and navigation is easy. The river journey from Wismar to the Great Falls should not exceed, in time, fifteen hours; that from the Great Falls to Canister Falls

twelve hours. The question resolves itself, therefore, into the supply of a sufficient number of boats to clear each party before the arrival of the next steamer. It is usual to estimate thirty persons, with their kit and provisions, to each river boat, so that in order to clear 1,500 people fifty boat trips will be necessary during three weeks—the suggested interval between the arrival of the parties.

As each boat could make two or possibly three trips each week, ten boats would be quite sufficient for each stage.

It is possible also that the service between Wismar and the Great Falls could best be operated with a tug and two or three large barges.

21. The question of finance, however, must be considered in conjunction with the permanent line of communication with the district.

If the Demerara River route is selected as the most suitable one by which to take these people to the Rupununi district, a concentration camp will have to be provided at Wismar to accommodate at least 1,500 persons. I am informed that it can be estimated that to provide shelter for families, which would be of a temporary nature, the cost will be in the neighbourhood of 1.50 dollars per head; this would cost, therefore, 2,250 to 2,500 dollars. Smaller rest camps would be required at Great Falls, Canister Falls and Kurupukari, and at each camp provision will have to be made for certain services, food and medical supplies, the cost of which will have to be added to the cost of the buildings.

Owing to the distance and added cost of transportation of such material as cannot be provided on the spot, the smaller camps will cost, on the average, 1,000 dollars each, and it is probable, therefore, that the concentration and rest camps alone will cost approximately 6,000 dollars. There will be, in addition, the cost of hiring or purchase of boats, motor engines, and possibly a tug and barges—all costly items. I am not at present able to give an estimate of their cost, but am endeavouring to ascertain this; it cannot be less than 7,000 dollars.

Further, the District Commissioner estimates that to convert the cattle trail from Canister Falls to Kurupukari into a road suitable for motor vehicles will cost approximately 23,000 dollars.

22. Thus it appears that in addition to the provision of camps an expenditure of some 30,000 dollars will be necessary in order to convey the settlers to the Rupununi via the Demerara River route.

As a permanent means of communication with the district, the best route will be by an extension of the Bartica-Potaro-Konawaruk road in one of the following directions:—

- (a) To a point on the Essequibo River shown on the map enclosed herewith as Mowasi Landing or some more suitable point higher up river, crossing the Essequibo River by punt, and thence to a point on the cattle trail north of Kurupukari; or alternatively
- (b) Southward to a point just north of the junction of the Siparuni and the Burro-Burro Rivers, where the Siparuni River will be crossed either by punt or a bridge, and thence southward, connecting with the cattle trail south of Kurupukari.

From the information now at my disposal it seems probable that the second alternative, crossing the Siparuni, will be the better. One river crossing only is necessary as against two by the Essequibo route, and indications are that a watershed between the Potaro and the Essequibo exists along which the road can be constructed.

As the crow flies, these extensions are each approximately 50 miles, but it is not possible until a location has been surveyed to estimate closely the length of the actual extension nor its cost, but working on the basis of 2,500 dollars per mile, which has been found to be the average cost of road-making in the interior, the cost of the extension will be approximately 150,000 dollars. A similar estimate was used in the case of the Tiboku road extension, which is 175,000 dollars for a distance of 70 miles. This can, I think, be safely used as a basis.

Members of the Geological Survey are proceeding to examine the Konawaruk-Mowasi-Essequibo-Siparuni area, and this party will be able to give some useful information as to the physical features of this area, about which little or nothing is known at the present time.

It may therefore be wise economically immediately to examine the possibility of extending the Potaro-Konawaruk road in one of the directions indicated above,



with a view to using this route for the conveyance of the settlers to the Rupununi. The stages of this route would be as follows:—

By ocean steamer to Bartica, where the concentration camp could be established, then by motor lorry right through to Kurupukari, rest camps being situated near Garraway Stream and at some point intermediate between Garraway Stream and Kurupukari. These camps would cost approximately the same amount as is estimated if the Demerara River route were used, but no boats or tugs would be necessary, neither would the conversion of the cattle trail into a motor road between Canister Falls and Kurupukari, there being thus a saving of some 30,000 dollars. Moreover, all work done and the money expended in the opening up of this route would be of permanent benefit, as this route must undoubtedly be the permanent one to the district, whereas money spent on the temporary Demerara River route would be of no permanent advantage.

I suggest, therefore, that these alternative routes be surveyed as early as possible.

23. I am quite satisfied that, as regards transport routes, there is no difficulty in reaching the district. The question to be decided is which of the two routes suggested will be economically the better. An organised plan of transport and provisioning will present no difficulty, and all that will be necessary will be an adequate fleet of lorries operating from Bartica.

24. I suggested in my telegram that Brigadier-General Browne, accompanied—if it is thought necessary—by a civilian officer acquainted with the agricultural requirements and capabilities of the settlers, should visit the colony as soon as possible in order to satisfy you that the possibilities of the district are such as would commend it to the Assyrians as desirable for their future home.

I propose, as soon as I am informed that a mission will be despatched, to send to the Rupununi a party consisting of a medical officer, an agricultural officer, a soil chemist and a geologist (instead of a surveyor, as first suggested), which party will be able to make investigations and collect information pending the arrival of the mission. I further propose that Brigadier-General Browne should be accompanied from Georgetown by Major Bone, Government veterinary surgeon, who knows the district well; also by some person who has resided in the district as a cicerone. Mr. Haynes, the District Commissioner, will then meet this party at Kurupukari or Canister Falls, and from that point accompany them.

It is estimated that the cost of sending the preliminary party to and around the district will be about 2,760 dollars, and that the time occupied will be about sixty-four days. I shall be glad if, when notifying me that it has been decided to send a mission from England, you will authorise the expenditure of that amount as an advance against the cost of the scheme.

The mission should calculate on spending at least three months in the colony, and their journey to the district will cost not less than the amount quoted for the preliminary party.

In this connexion I enclose a minute by the Commissioner of Lands and Mines.

25. Although opinion generally is favourable as to the possibilities of this district for small holdings, yet I think the responsibility for a final decision must rest upon someone with intimate knowledge of these people. There is always the possibility that, after settlement, these people may not find the district entirely to their liking, and I note that, having once settled these people in an area selected, there can be no question of repatriation to Iraq.

26. As I have informed you in my telegram, I decided to consult my Executive Council confidentially. I had no misgivings as to the attitude of the members, but I felt that, in order to expedite the matter, as time appears to be a matter of considerable importance, it would be well to ascertain their views (especially those of the unofficial members) as soon as possible, and I am glad to have been able to inform you that the proposal was received with enthusiasm. The scheme is regarded as affording the opportunity for which the colony has long wanted to increase its population, and developing its vast uninhabited areas. I enclose a copy of the Executive Council minute in this connexion.

I have also asked that I may be permitted to inform the Legislative Council of the proposal in due course.

27. As it appears imperative for political reasons to move the Assyrians from Iraq as soon as possible, and as the Rupununi district of British Guiana

promises to be the only suitable locality in which to settle them; time also being an important factor, I submit the following for your consideration:—

From September to April is the dry season in the Rupununi district and much can be done during those months to prepare for the settlers. If, however, full advantage of this season is not taken a delay of a year will probably result, as little can be done towards settlement in the wet season—May to August, during which months much of the savannahs is flooded, and communication, except by boat, is difficult.

The financial position of the Rupununi Company is such that it may be assumed that they are spending little or nothing on the maintenance of their assets in the district. Their cattle roam wildly over wide areas and their buildings and fencing are probably suffering from want of upkeep.

If competent supervision and money were provided now, much valuable time will be saved and heavy expenditure in the future avoided.

During this dry season also, much can be done to improve communication with the district.

The road from Konawaruk could be pushed through either to the Essequibo or Siparuni and thence to the cattle trail, the latter being examined with a view to obtaining the best alignment for a road for motor-vehicles, if the present alignment of the trail is not the best possible. Improvement of communication will greatly facilitate settlement of these people.

The area can also be examined and sites chosen and cleared for villages near to good land and water, and even temporary shelters erected.

My purpose in making these suggestions is to invite attention to the importance, if time is an essential factor, of carrying out as many of the preliminary operations as possible during this approaching dry season.

I have, &c.

C. DOUGLAS-JONES,  
*Officer Administering the Government.*

#### SCHEDULE.

1. Memorandum by Mr. Harvey Read regarding settlement in Rupununi District, June 22, 1930.
2. Memorandum by Mr. L. H. Hill on Rupununi Land Settlement, July 6, 1930.
3. Copy of Report by Land Officer (Mr. E. A. Haynes), Rupununi District, September 4, 1931.
4. Copy of Report by Land Officer (Mr. E. A. Haynes), Rupununi District, November 4, 1931.
5. Letter from Mr. B. L. Hart to Mr. Haynes on experiments in wheat, May 25, 1931.
6. Copies of Reports by Mr. E. A. Haynes and the Reverend H. C. Mather, S.J., on experiments in wheat in the Rupununi District, September 15, 1931.
7. Observations by Dr. J. G. Myers on a journey from the mouth of the Amazon to Mount Roraima and down the Cattle Trail to Georgetown (extract).
8. Notes by acting Director of Agriculture—The Rupununi District, with especial reference to soil fertility, August 5, 1934.
9. Notes by Major T. Bone, Government Veterinary Surgeon, August 5, 1934.
10. Notes by Mr. C. C. King on Rupununi Colonisation, August 14, 1934.

See also photographs—

- (a) Mr. B. L. Hart's ranch.
- (b) Cattle and cattle trail.
- (c) Rupununi district as per list attached.<sup>(1)</sup>

<sup>(1)</sup> Not reproduced.



1.—*Memorandum by Mr. Harvey Read regarding Settlement in Rupununi District.*

Private Secretary,  
Government House.

26, Oronoque Street, Georgetown,  
June 22, 1930.

Sir,  
With reference to my conversation with his Excellency on the 16th instant regarding settlement in the Rupununi district, I have the honour to submit the following:—

*Suitability.*

A selected area near the Government Station at Annai could absorb, at the least, 500 families. The land is eminently suitable for stock-raising. The soil is arable and productive with natural drainage, excellent for dry farming. Health conditions everything to be desired. Permanent clean water supply. Fish is plentiful—an important consideration.

*Settlers.*

The Immigration Agent-General informed me that there are five East Indians from the Punjab—the soldier caste sikh, who have recently arrived from India, having paid their own passages. The inducements offered to warrant them sitting on the coastlands were not attractive enough. They are dry land workers only. I feel sure that conditions in the Rupununi district would suit them in every respect. To me they seem to be the ideal settlers for the district.

His Excellency's permission is requested to permit me to interview these men with the assistance of the Immigration Agent-General.

*Advantages.*

A ready market in the district would be open to these men for farine, corn and beans; farine is the staple food of the district. It is a necessity. I can guarantee to dispose of all the farine these men could produce at 2.50 dollars a basket (approximately 40 lb.). An estimate of their first crop would produce about 600 baskets—1,500 dollars.

Corn is scarce and in much demand. This is sold at the same price as farine. First crop 600 baskets—1,500 dollars.

There is a certain market for beans, but at present I cannot give prices or quantities.

Later on there would be a market for tapioca, starch and tobacco.

A hard-working East Indian named Singh, who served throughout the war, has fields near Annai, and his services could be utilised to assist the first settlers.

*Disadvantages and Cost.*

Settlers cannot use the cattle trail until November. On arrival fields have to be cut, houses built, and nothing can be planted until the beginning of next year's wet season—early May—corn and cassava (for farine) are planted in the same field. The corn is reaped after the rains, early September, and can be sold immediately. The cassava has to wait until the dry season of the following year, but during this time another field is cut and planted, and each year afterwards there is always a crop of corn and cassava.

- (i) The settler has to be shepherded through the cattle trail to his land and fed.
- (ii) On arrival fed for nine months.
- (iii) The services of Singh for a short period to "show them the ropes."
- (iv) A temporary shelter whilst they are making their own houses.
- (v) A supply of corn from the Department of Agriculture. Cassava shoots from the Aboriginal Indian.

*Estimated cost of—*

	Dollars.
(i) Allowing for free passages to Paradise, 10 dollars a head to feed each man through the trail ...	50.00
Services of Singh ...	25.00
(ii) ...	100.00
(iii) ...	60.00
(iv) ...	20.00
(v) Allowing for free corn ...	15.00
Total estimated cost ...	270.00

I hope after the men have been interviewed that the cost will be considerably less.

*Inducements.*

Twenty-five acres of land. Free title to be given after three years if the responsible officer is satisfied that the land is beneficially occupied, which includes them sending for their wives. The Immigration Agent-General informs me that passages can be easily arranged.

Undoubtedly through their communicating with their wives in India information would be spread amongst their friends and relations as regards the inducements for settlement, and one might reasonably anticipate by this means a gradual automatic influx of the better type of East Indian.

*Conclusion.*

The East Indian Singh I feel sure could recruit locally the better type of Indian for settlement under similar conditions.

I have, &c.

D. HARVEY READ,  
L.O., T.M., Rupununi District.

2.—*Memorandum by Mr. L. H. Hill on Rupununi Land Settlement.*

1. A free gift of 25 acres of land in the Rupununi to each head of a family in consideration of—

- (a) Three years' beneficial occupation of the land allotted, which will be rent free during the period of probation (three years);
- (b) A satisfactory report by the commissioner as to the intending settlers, industry and general behaviour during his period of probation;
- (c) The settler bringing his wife and family to join him in the Rupununi within five years of his arrival on the settlement.

2. The intending settler to be provided with free transport by rail and steamer from Georgetown to Paradise on the Berbice River, from whence he will walk by easy stages to the site in the Rupununi he is to be settled on. This journey on foot will occupy eleven days.

3. The intending settler will be provided, free of cost, with such food as the country through which he will journey and be finally settled upon produces, from the time of his leaving Georgetown for the Rupununi to the time of his reaping the first crop from the land allotted him.

4. The intending settler will be escorted, free of charge, from Georgetown to the Rupununi by some suitable person selected by the commissioner of the district.

5. The intending settler will be provided free of cost with a temporary shelter that is weather-proof to live in on his arrival at his destination in the Rupununi, until such time as he is able to erect a house of his own.

6. The intending settler will have the benefit of the advice of the commissioner (or some person deputed by him for the purpose) in connexion with the building of his house and all matters pertaining to the crops best suited to the locality and the planting of them. The settler will be under protection of the commissioner, whose duty it will be—especially during his period of probation—to advise and help him in all matters appertaining to his welfare.



7. The country in which the settler will be located is suitable to the growing of farinha (cassava), corn and beans. Farinha—the staple food of the district—fetches the equivalent of 2.50 dollars a basket of 40 lb. in weight. Five industrious men should, from their first planting, be able to reap 600 baskets (of 40 lb. each) worth 1,500 dollars. A ready sale for this quantity of farinha is guaranteed.

8. Planting is not possible before May in each year, when the rains commence. Corn planted then is reaped in September, cassava the following May.

9. The Rupununi is eminently suitable for stock-raising, cattle, horses, goats and sheep. Business is transacted mostly by barter and usually through the medium of farinha. A cow, for instance, is presently the equivalent of two baskets of farinha of 40 lb. in weight each, or about 5 dollars in money.

10. There are presently two shops at Mora (the locality in the Rupununi where it is proposed to put settlers on the land). These sell cloth, field implements, household utensils (pots, pans, &c.), food-stuffs, and most things that are needed.

The nearest shop would be about three hours' ride on horseback from where settlers will be located.

11. On account of the Rupununi being so far distant from the settled area of the colony, as well as being but sparsely populated, there are no doctors at present in the district. The services of a sick-nurse, however, will be available in case of sickness. The climate of the country is considered very healthy.

12. There is an abundance of good drinking water in the district. Rivers and streams abound and fish are plentiful. The areas over which stock may be grazed are at present practically unlimited.

13. Rice (*i.e.*, wet rice) is not presently being grown in the district, but there is land available for planting rice near by, which is under water from May to September every year.

14. Intending settlers journeying on foot along the cattle trail from Tacama on the Berbice River to the Rupununi must necessarily be prepared to carry whatever goods and chattels they propose taking with them themselves. This in addition to food supplies for the journey. The usual load carried by a man is one of 60 lb. weight.

15. The distance from Tacama to Mora is 180 miles. There are rest-houses along the trail, the stages of the journey being as follows:—

First stage	10 miles to Warinama.
Second stage	13 miles to Labba.
Third stage	16 miles to Yawakuri.
Fourth stage	12 miles to Ite.
Fifth stage	15 miles to Keleuenu.
Sixth stage	25 miles to Canister Falls.
Seventh stage	20 miles to Kurupukari.
Eighth stage	15 miles to First Grassfield.
Ninth stage	22 miles to Second Grassfield.
Tenth stage	15 miles to Surama.
Eleventh stage	16 miles to Annai.

180

16. Such settlers as are desirous of entering into occupation of lands in the Rupununi during 1930 should be prepared to leave Georgetown in November 1930.

17. In the event of a settler who arrived in the Rupununi in November-December deciding to return to Georgetown, his first opportunity for so doing would be by boat the following April.

L. H. H.

July 6, 1930.

### 3.—Copy of Report by Land Officer, Rupununi District.

Bon Success, Rupununi District,  
September 4, 1931.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit the following report for the month of August 1931:—

During the first six days of the month I remained at Annai police station waiting for the return of my boat from the Rupununi mouth, where I had sent it back for cargo brought up by Garnett's boat for Bon Success and Annai, some for me, Public Works Department and Police Department, Annai. Whilst at Annai I visited the area I proposed to put in the small agriculturists, and on the 4th, 5th and 6th I held successive courts in its criminal jurisdiction.

2. On the 7th I left Annai and proceeded to Eupukari, thence to Bon Success, travelling by cart to Marikanata, thence by boat to Pirara, thence down the Pirara into the Ireng and Takutu rivers. We arrived at Bon Success on the evening of the 15th August.

3. Whilst at Parara I inspected Mr. Hart's homestead. His machine-shop is driven by a large windmill, and he has erected a steam-engine which obtains steam from a Merryweather boiler. He proposes to use this engine when there is no wind, or when extra power is needed. The other appliances were a circular wood-cutting saw, a band saw, a lathe, a wood-planing machine, one cassava grating mill, and one cassava press. Water was being pumped by the windmill to his house, kitchen, yard, kitchen-garden and surrounding orchard of orange, lime and grape fruit (all bearing fruit), also several kinds of fruit trees. All the useless weeds around the homestead had been replaced by Bahama grass, which was flourishing over some 4 acres. Mr. Hart had also a motor lorry which he had converted into a bus to carry seven passengers and their baggage. Both the steam-engine and the motor-bus are the first of their kind to be brought into the Rupununi district.

4. From the 16th to the 24th I was in office attending to district business and superintending the repairs to Bon Success buildings:—

- (a) Boathand logie walled in with adobe.
- (b) Two-thirds of the kitchen wall renewed and new ridge put on.
- (c) The entire roof of Bon Success house with exception of the main body roof was pulled down and new leaf put on (five snakes came down with the old leaf and were killed). The concrete floor of the house patched in several places. One spare room and servants' room floors concreted. New office built in south-west gallery, floor cemented, three casement glass windows and one small one put in, one door facing south to admit public and another put in connecting the office with main building. The whole room walled in with adobe.
- This puts an end to the public going into the dwelling part of the building, and allow of the police having sufficient room to do their office work when at Bon Success.
- (d) A small house built in the yard for the saddling.

5. On the 25th I left Bon Success 11 A.M. and proceeded to the Kanaku Mountain and Indian reservation. Arriving there I was joined by Captain Samuel and two other Indians, who took me to the forest on the mountain, where I inspected the Indians' experimental field. The rice was doing fine, strong, healthy stalks, as good as I have seen on the coast. The rice plots were not large—each about 50 feet square. The first lot had thrown out full heads of full rice and beginning to turn yellow. The second plot planted early June was just bursting. The Indians were highly delighted over these plots. The pigeon peas, and increase (black-eye peas) were doing well, also plantains, &c. They propose to call the whole of the reservation Indians together to plant a big field next year. The soil on which the field is located is above flood level and is a dark loam.

6. On the 28th and 29th August I cut a line into the Kanaku Mountains, going across a spur from the main ridge between the Nappi and a tributary



named "Kraswata," about 1,500 feet in height. Sample of rocks taken forwarded:—

- (a) Rock formation or exposure extending upwards from foot to about 700 feet.
- (b) Rock exposure from 700 feet upwards to summit
- (c) Washing from creek gravel.

I came to a halt on the head waters of the Kraswata Creek (tributary to Nappi), where I could see the watershed, which rose to a further height, apparently about 2,000 feet above sea level. The interior of these mountains appear to me to be gabbro. The washings in the creek bed carry fragments of shale, and rounded quartz pebbles. Test washings indicated diamonds, not gold. I returned to Bon Success on the 30th August.

7. The rainfall for the month was 8 inches 87 parts. The creeks above and below this station are still too swollen for travelling, and at some points where it is possible to swim the horses there are no boats to cross equipment and provisions.

8. Experiments in four varieties of wheat in the Bon Success savannah were not successful owing to destruction by ants, bugs, and too much water on the ground. Nevertheless, that which survived grew to 18 inches in height, gave a full bloom with seed hardly inferior to the original seed sent me. These samples were planted the 1st June, 1931, reaped the 31st August, 1931. The results, with samples of bloom and seed, sent to the Director of Agriculture. If this seed had been planted in good soil at mountain foot the results might have been different.

I have, &c.

E. A. HAYNES.

4.—*Copy of Report by Land Officer, Rupununi, dated 4th November, 1931.*

Sir,

I have the honour to submit the following report for the months of September and October:—

From the 1st to 17th September I was in office, and on the 18th, the creeks having become fordable, I left Bon Success to inspect the Rupununi Development Company (Limited) lease to the south of the Kanaku mountains, and also at the same time visit the Indian settlements in that part of the district.

On the 20th I attended a round-up of horses at Dadanawa. Some 200 were brought in, several were half-bred horses, well built, with good bone; the results of the imported stallion. A rancher, who was present, bought one to improve his stock.

Next day accompanied by Mr. Turner, the manager of the Rupununi Company (Limited), I visited Sand Creek or Katiwau Indian Reservation, where I commenced a rough compass survey of the reservation. This survey I completed on the 25th and left for Whichabi.

On the 26th I rode out from Whichabi into the area lying between the cattle trail, Kanaku Mountains, and the Rupununi River. There I saw about 1,000 head of cattle, a great many being half- and quarter-breed Herefords belonging to the Rupununi Development Company (Limited). I returned to Whichabi the same day.

At Whichabi, on the 27th September, I started a survey of 50 acres, for Mr. J. Melville, M.P. 1379/24, completing same on the afternoon of the 28th September.

On the 29th September I left for Dadanawa and resumed the inspection of the company's lease and making and examination of their books.

The 30th September, accompanied by Mr. Turner, I visited their paddocks and also saw a new paddock in course of construction—only about a mile remained to effect a closure on about 50 square miles. Mr. Turner returned to Dadanawa, and the Ranger and I continued south to an outstation on the Wariwau, about 25 miles to the south-east of Dadanawa. Here the company had a paddock 1 square mile, a large corral and one house. A Wapisiana Indian and his family living here was in charge of the station.

On the 1st October I rode across country some 20 miles to Out-Station No. 2, about 1 mile west of Shea Indian Village. Here another paddock 1 mile square, corral and house had been erected. Three families of Wapisiana lived on the spot, the head man being in charge of the station.

All the low-lying land or flats from Dadanawa to the Wariwau Creek were closely grazed. The hills were covered with old grass and practically untouched. The flats formed about 25 per cent. of the whole area. Several small herds of cattle were seen among the hills, but only a few could be approached close enough for inspection. Some of the horses met were absolutely wild and cleared off at half a mile. On the other hand, I was able to get close to some good horses with half-breed stallions, also a good many fine bullocks. A great number of old cows were seen that should not be allowed to breed; this might have some bearing on the poor quality calves complained of and not overstocking. On the way I climbed a hill some 250 feet high and had an excellent view of the surrounding country.

On the 2nd I left Out-Station No. 2 and travelled south at an average distance of about 3 miles from the apparent bush edge. (This forest is broken into islands of bush and savannah. Looking at it from the open savannah it appears to be one unbroken line of forest, but this savannah and forest extends some places to 7 miles in depth.) Visiting the Indian villages and settlements, starting at "Shea," and camped for the night at a settlement on the right bank of the Wariwau Creek at 5 p.m. Next day I rode down the right bank Wariwau back to the Out-Station No. 1, visiting on the way one Indian settlement, on the right bank, and another on the left bank, near the Out-Station.

On the 4th I left Out-Station No. 1 and rode to the south-east, thence south, thence south-west along the line of Indian villages to the last one in the open savannah, right bank Rupununi, camping at 4.45 p.m. All the Indians I saw and spoke with were well and contented, had no complaints. Only one man remarked to me that "the Government were taking every care to educate the black children on the coast whilst their children were being brought up like hogs for want of proper schools." (This was interpreted to me by the Ranger.)

The upper half of the savannah, right bank Rupununi, or that portion lying between the Wariwau Creek and towards the source of the Rupununi, did not contain many head of cattle. The flats and hills were ungrazed, and only in the vicinity of the Wapisiana villages I saw a few head of cattle and signs of the grass being grazed. It appeared that very few company cattle existed in this section; the last I saw were in the close vicinity of the Wariwau Out-Station No. 1.

On the 5th October I crossed the Rupununi River in the open savannah (about 1 mile from the bush line and about 15 miles from its source). After an hour's ride from the village we turned north and rode toward Out-Station No. 3, passing through on the way one Indian settlement, and reaching the out-station on the Tawaiwau about 2 p.m. This station had a paddock 1 mile square, large corral and a house, also another house belonging to the Indian who was in charge of the station.

On the 6th I continued down the left bank Rupununi, and on the way I saw several small herds of cattle at close range, very excellent cattle in pink of condition, and in every herd were half and quarter-breed Hereford bulls, calves and full-grown animals. An average distance of 2 miles inland from the river right on to Dadanawa was closely grazed in the flats and portions of the hills. Arriving at Whichabi I camped for the night and on the 7th I left, riding along the Kanaku mountain foot. A few scattered head of cattle, of which a fair number was half and quarter Hereford, were met as far west as 15 miles of the Rupununi River. Thence no company cattle were seen, only a herd of animals belonging to the Makusi villages by the Kanaku Mountains. I returned to Bon Success on the 8th October at 11 a.m.

From the 9th to the 16th I was in office attending to head office correspondence, &c. I also attended a meeting of the cattle ranchers on the 14th, which was held at my quarters. On the 17th I left Bon Success to resume the inspection of the Rupununi Development Company's lease lying between the Rupununi and Takutu Rivers.

On the 19th October I crossed the Sawariwau River and camped for the night in Sand Creek Indian settlement to the north of Kusad Mountain; on the way here I saw a few company's cattle (the other cattle seen belonged to Indians) with the Hereford strain, and a few really A 1 half-breed Hereford bulls. The grass



was merely touched here and there, indicating that the quantity of animals in this area was very small. Mr. Davis, the Forestry Officer, who accompanied me, remained at this point with the Ranger to ascend into the Kusad Mountain forest. I proceeded onward, passing between the Kusad and Pinnitet mountain groups, came to a halt at Kawariwau Creek in the Upper Takutu River.

Up to within 10 miles of Maiwau Creek (Duck Creek) I saw a few (very few) head of cattle of the company, but they were an excellent lot, having the Hereford strain. The grass was hardly touched in this area.

In the vicinity of the Kawariwau I only saw Indian cattle. There were several Indian settlements (too many to visit on this inspection) in the vicinity of the Kusad, Pinnitet and Raad mountain group; also along the Takutu.

On the 21st I started on my return journey, as the Indians told me that no company's cattle were to be seen beyond that point, except in the vicinity of the Tamatun Mountain foot, and that they were absolutely wild.

On the 22nd, from Maiwau I rode to Sawariwau, to a point about 10 miles below its source. Thence downwards, following the left bank to 5 miles below Mount Dakaban, where I crossed the river and returned to Bon Success on the afternoon of the 23rd at 3 P.M.

Since my last visit of inspection of the company's lease in 1923 there has been a wonderful improvement generally all round. Better horses, better strains of cattle, especially on the left bank Rupununi River. Extensive wiring in of paddocks, improved buildings, more corrals, better organisation and control. Lastly, the good relations existing between the company and the Indians, which did not exist in 1923, due to Captain Muster's idea that he could drive them into the mountains off the savannah.

In my opinion, half of the area on the right bank of the Rupununi River is fully stocked. The latter half practically vacant except for a few hundred head of Indian cattle. And on the left bank Rupununi River a belt along the river 30 by 10 miles is also satisfactorily stocked—about 300 square miles—but beyond that the cattle are very much scattered and lost in the area. If the lot were gathered into one spot, another 50 square miles would be sufficient to hold them.

The pasturage and condition of cattle are far better to the south of the Kanaku Mountain than it is to the north, and, further, the country to the south is more liberally watered.

The Indians (Wapisiana) are more civilised than their sister tribe, the Macusis, to the north, and with very little more help they will be on par or the same social level with the small rancher in the district. Perhaps the Rupununi Development Company might help them by dividing up the control of the company's cattle amongst them, with permission to take milk and an occasional kill. (This will put an end to cattle stealing, and if visited by the staff from time to time to see that they carry out this agreement, the wild animals will all be tamed in a short while.)

The 24th to 25th I was in office attending to correspondence with Head Office, and on the 26th I left Bon Success for Annai, arriving there 6 P.M. on the 28th October.

At Annai I held court on the 29th in its criminal jurisdiction, four cases. On the 30th, in its civil jurisdiction, one case. I attended to further correspondence which arrived at Annai, and on the 31st left Annai for Bon Success.

I have, &c.

E. A. HAYNES,

Land Officer, Rupununi.

##### 5.—Letter from Mr. B. L. Hart to Mr. Haynes on Experiments in Wheat.

Good Luck Ranch,

Pirara, May 25, 1931.

Dear Haynes,

The wheat seed arrived to-day, and I will try my best to plant them in a place where it will give a fair test. I am sorry that there was not a sample of oats; to my opinion, oats would be the best, or at least it would be more valuable

to us than wheat. Corn is another crop that there is room for experiments; of course, we know that corn does well here on the forest land or on savannah land that has been fertilised, such as old corrals, but what we need is better varieties, but, unfortunately, none has arrived in time to plant this season.

Very faithfully yours,

B. L. HART.

##### 6.—Reports on Experiments in Wheat in the Rupununi District.

- (1) Bon Success. Report on results forwarded.
- (2) Rev. Fr. Mather. Report received and forwarded.
- (3) B. L. Hart. Absolute failure. Seen by E. A. H.
- (4) A. M. Grove. Absolute failure. Reported verbally by Grove.

(Signed)

E. A. HAYNES,

Land Officer, Rupununi.

(1)

##### Experiment at Bon Success.

(a) Seed planted on plain, virgin savannah soil, not treated with manure. Land ploughed.

(b) Planted the 1st June, 1931. Reaped the 31st August, 1931.

(c) Results destroyed by coushi ants and a bug before quite ripe. Ants cur the leaves and stalk. Bug sucked out the milk from the wheat, and only left a few grains on each stalk or none at all.

(d) Weight of seed before planting, viz. :—

Kenya Governor 9 ounces net.

Kenya Standard 14 ounces net.

K2R5 (L.2) 7½ ounces net.

B.F. 36.C.1.(c) 10 ounces net.

(e) All the wheat came up, but were destroyed as above stated before mature. I had to reap the little I am forwarding to the director about a fortnight too soon, or the bug would have destroyed it. The stalks were strong and stood 18 inches high; samples of bloom sent. The ripe seed compared favourably with the original sample sent.

(f) Samples forwarded, A.D.C. seed and bloom. Plot B was totally destroyed by the ants and bugs.

(g) The experiment is worth carrying out next year. This can be done in the experimental field at "Marikanota" Forest Island by Major Walker, and again, on the lands at the mountain foot by the Indians. The Kenya Standard appeared to me to be the best of the lot. B.F. 36.C.1.(c) next best. All four samples bore fruit. As a test of the fertility of the land I planted the wheat on: I planted a patch of maize adjacent to it in the same enclosure. The results were very poor. The ears were in the majority small, some of the trees stunted, and the most that one stalk bore was two ears. This leads me to believe that if the wheat had been planted in the bush area belt in the vicinity of the Kanaku Mountain foot we would have had excellent results.

I inspected Mr. Hart's plot; there were at the time about four stalks still alive which had seed. Only a few grains remained in each bloom. The bugs had destroyed them, as at Bon Success. Weeds had also choked out the wheat. He planted his samples in an old corral which had been planted out repeatedly.

Mr. Grove reported similar results; he had planted in the savannah.

Report from Rev. Father Mather attached.

E. A. HAYNES.

September 15, 1931.



(2)

To the Land Officer,  
Rupununi District.

St. Ignatius' Mission, Takutu River,  
Rupununi District,

Dear Sir,

September 12, 1931.

I have the honour to submit the following report on the results of the experimental planting of the four samples of wheat:—

1. I regret to say that no success was achieved. Three samples failed owing to weeds; the fourth seemed not to germinate at all.

2. The samples were planted as follows:—

In every case two seeds to each hole; the holes 2 to 3 inches deep and 6 to 8 inches apart, running in rows from north to south.

*Soil.*—Light, well drained, rather sandy. It was a corral or cattle-pen some ten years ago, was cultivated and planted with maize about six years ago, but has been grass-grown for the past four years.

*Situation.*—Near our mission house (Takutu). It was weeded and hoed up six inches deep for the wheat planting experiment. A fair quantity of old cow-manure remained in the soil. No top-dressing was applied. The plot was fenced round with barbed wire and netting.

*Time of planting, &c., vide infra.*

Sample.	Weight.	Planted.	Remarks.
B.F., 36.C.1(c) ...	4 oz.	June 2 and 3	Green shoots appeared in ten days. This sample promised well, showed the sturdiest growth and all the seeds seemed to germinate. Weeds came strongly, and in two and a half months had overshot and stifled the wheat.
K.2.R.5(L.2) ...	3 oz.	June 4 and 5	No blades appeared above the soil.
Kenya Governor ...	2½ oz.	June 8	Very sparse growth; about 2 per cent. germinated.
Kenya Standard ...	2½ oz.	June 9	Fairly promising at first; about 75 per cent. sprang up, but weeds overtook them, and in one month they were impoverished and soon died.

Weeding was not undertaken after planting for fear of damaging the wheat. The weed—"fowl-foot"—has spreading roots. It is a favourite grass for cattle. The first sample just kept level with the weeds and reached a height of about 2 feet only. The heads failed to ripen. The straws were thin and weak.

*Weather Conditions.*—During the period 1st June–31st August, 1931 were unfavourable (in my opinion), being unusually wet with very little sunshine.

The rainfall was—

May	...	...	17.03 inches on 21 days.
June	...	...	12.77 inches on 22 days.
July	...	...	20.27 inches on 28 days.
August	...	...	11.05 inches on 22 days.

H. C. MATHER, S.J.,

St. Ignatius' Mission, Takutu River.

7.—*Observations on a Journey from the Mouth of the Amazon to Mount Roraima and down the Cattle-Trail to Georgetown.*

BY

J. G. MYERS, D.Sc., F.E.S., F.Z.S.

Imperial Institute of Entomology, and Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture.

(Reprinted from the *Agricultural Journal of British Guiana*, Vol. V, 2, 1934.)

(Extract.)

*The Rupununi Savannahs.*

By far the predominant grass over the whole of the Rupununi savannahs, both north and south of the Kanuku Mountains, is *Trachypogon plumosus* (Macusi name, Wan-na). The distribution of other grasses and other savannah plants was studied in some detail. Three questions are of special interest to the ecologist and may be considered briefly here.

The first is that of stocking. As Major Bone has already remarked, the whole area is greatly understocked. One may ride for days and see practically no sign of grazing save in the immediate vicinity of corrals and homesteads. This is in marked contrast to the savannahs just across the border in Brazil and the still more extensive llanos of Venezuela, especially in the States of Guarico and Apure. Both the Brazilian and the Venezuelan plains have been stocked for a much longer period than the Rupununi. Save within 10 miles or so of the main affluents of the Orinoco they began with a closely similar vegetation, which has now been very profoundly modified over huge areas, especially in Venezuela. This modification, which is wholly in the direction of deterioration, is probably due less to gross overstocking than to mismanagement leading to overstocking for certain periods and in certain areas. There are now, especially in Venezuela, hundreds of square miles covered almost exclusively with inedible weeds, notably *Hyptis suaveolens* in the drier plains, and *Ipomoea crassicaulis* in the hollows. In the Brazilian campos of the Rio Branco there are similar though less extensive areas of *Sida* sp., a weed which, among others, also takes possession in the Rupununi, but so far only in small holding-paddocks and corrals, which are necessarily periodically overstocked. The Rupununi savannahs as a whole are as yet unspoiled; the vast bulk of their vegetation consisting of a grass, which, while not eminently palatable in its older stages on account of coarseness and toughness, is yet eaten regularly by cattle and must form one of their mainstays. The older settled savannahs of Brazil and Venezuela, however, undoubtedly indicate the changes which may be expected if stocking is increased in the Rupununi anywhere near to capacity without the provision of fences or other means for the correct management and rotation of pastures.

The second question is the much disputed one of burning the savannah. This was an old and traditional custom of the Indians for signalling and other purposes long before European stock was introduced, and has become a regular practice on both Brazilian and Rupununi ranches, with or without the consent and encouragement of the owner or manager. It is a matter of common observation that cattle concentrate from considerable distances on areas which have recently been burned, and graze eagerly on the fresh green growth. So far as one can gather from ecological study, this burning is not modifying and at least under present conditions of stocking cannot modify the composition of the savannah vegetation (which is what Clements calls a fire sub-climax)—the elements of which have been accustomed and adapted to periodic burning over a very long period of time. There would probably, under present low stocking, be more scrub and less grass if burning were not practised. It seems therefore unlikely, present conditions of stocking being always understood, that burning is doing any damage in the Rupununi, provided it is done early enough in the season to ensure that there will be sufficient rain coming to prevent the resultant young growth from dying. And at present, without the use of fire, there is not enough grazing to prevent an undesirable accumulation of coarse roughage, to the production of which the dominant grass, *Trachypogon*, particularly tends. There are no entomological grounds for the belief expressed to me more than once that burning destroys natural enemies of ticks and so increases the ear-tick infestation. Burning must probably destroy large numbers of larval ticks, and must thus, as far as it affects the tick problem at all, be considered beneficial.



As Hensel (*Jl. Agric. Res.*, Vol. 23, pp. 631-643, 1923) remarked, after extensive and well-controlled experiments on Kansas grasslands: "The last word regarding burning has yet to be written. The results secured, as these experiments show, will likely depend not only on seasonal conditions but also upon the kind of grasses and other vegetation present." The results in question showed: (1) That, in the earlier part of the season, there was considerably more growth of grass on the burned areas; (2) after four years there were 21 per cent. more grass plants on the burned areas than when the experiments began, while the unburned areas showed an increase of only 7 per cent.; (3) there was a decrease of sedges on the burned areas, and an increase on the unburned; and (4) weeds decrease on the burned areas, and increased on the unburned. "The conclusion is that studies so far conducted have failed to show that burning is injurious." (Hensel). These remarks apply, of course, solely to the light burning of grassland. Forest fires, on the other hand, are, of course, always and everywhere injurious, but these are rarely deliberate, save in the tiny patches of Indian provision-ground, where the fire is well under control, and is restricted to the felled or partially felled area.

The third question is, what do the cattle actually eat? The application of the direct method in ecology, so successfully used by Dr. Leonard Cockayne in studying the montane tussock grasslands of New Zealand, is valuable here, and was employed by the writer, using as subjects the five pack-bullocks which brought his baggage to the coast. The result of this study will be published in detail, but it may be interesting to remark here that several savannah plants not commonly regarded as pasturage at all are evidently greedily eaten by stock. These include the dwarf shrubs *Byrsonima verbascifolia* (Macusi name, *kenamanarare*), *Byrsonima crassifolia* (*maripati*), and *Pulicourea rigida*. The last is specially interesting since Le Cointe, writing of Amazonian pastures, mentions a *Pulicourea* among the list of plants poisonous to stock. Chemical investigations would be desirable, but the animals seem to suffer no ill-effects.

The Rupununi savannahs form a biological island, separated in every direction from civilisation by vast forests, formerly only traversed by rivers, offering little chance of passage to introduced insect pests. As a direct result, the cultivated plants of the Rupununi are usually free from pests other than those, little serious, which are already indigenous to the hinterland.<sup>(1)</sup> The cattle-trail has pierced this barrier in a small way, and additional traffic from the coast will provide opportunities for pests to reach the Rupununi. It would be eminently desirable to delay this ingress of pests as long as possible, if, as seems probable, it may not be practicable to stop it altogether. Ranchers bringing plants of any kind from the coast would be well-advised to fumigate or spray them before leaving; or else bring only seeds.

#### *Rupununi to Roraima.*

In the Rupununi during the month of September it was exceedingly difficult to procure Indians as carriers owing, chiefly, to the prevalence of severe fevers in many of the settlements. When we finally set out, up the left bank of the Ireng, towards Roraima, the first large village, Kurasabai, some 10 miles within the Pakaraima mountains, had just one-third of its total population down with fever, and there had been several deaths. In addition this village, formerly noted for its horses, had recently lost every one of them, apparently from *mal de caderas*. Beyond Kurasabai, right through the Pakaraimas, to Mazaruni Head and Roraima, we met no more fever among the Indians, save an outbreak among my own men, undoubtedly already infected. There were no more requests for quinine until we had left Roraima and were well down in the savannahs again on the Brazilian side.

The route lay very largely through forest—but forests of very varied types—some of the variation being due to widely different original botanical composition and others to extensive burning, resulting in different stages of second-growth succession. Much of the forest in the mountains just north of the Rupununi savannahs might almost be classified as monsoon-forest, with an abundance of such trees as *Ormosia histiophylla*, *Cochlospermum* and *Helicteres*. A considerable proportion of the trees in such woods are completely leafless during the dry

<sup>(1)</sup> Karinambo already forms an unfortunate exception to this, in that citrus plants there are seriously plagued with scale-insects attended by ants.

season. But even when, further north, one traverses almost continuous high tropical rain-forest, different types succeed one another several times in the course of every day's march. In addition to typical mixed rain-forest, there were no fewer than four kinds in which dominance of one species was so nearly absolute that these woods consisted of almost pure stands over considerable areas. Unfortunately the problem of identification is almost insuperable to a traveller, especially as the trees in question were often quite unknown to my Macusi. Among these pure types was mora, which grows in this region in practically pure stands, as in Trinidad, and far more so than in the British Guiana lowlands. In one such stand I measured a fallen mora 152 feet long to where the main branches, still 7 inches thick, had rotted and fallen away. This tree must have been 200 feet high. Another gregarious tree, occupying smaller areas, however, was a species of *Peltogyne* (purpleheart). A third was a lofty tree with tremendously developed buttress roots, in this and other respects resembling closely a New Zealand *Laurelia*. The Patamona name for it is *asheroa*. A fourth, which covered larger areas than any of the others, showed a curious natural coppice-formation rising from huge elevated composite boles.

There are, however, in addition, extensive savannah lands at intervals *en route*. The most important may be briefly mentioned, in the order in which they are encountered. The Kurasabai savannah is extensive, and is remarkable for a much more varied grass vegetation than the main Rupununi. Among these other grasses are evidently some which form exceptionally good fodder, for I noted "the cattle looked the sleekest and fattest I have seen in the region, with backs reminiscent of Smithfield." Ichilibar savannah is even larger, but in its western portion at least, is very stony and the pasturage sparse and poor. Further north between Ichilibar and Kerikabaru there are several long stretches of upland savannah, and here for the first time the dominance of the main Rupununi grass is disputed by another species (*Paspalum contractum*) which frequently covers large areas almost to the exclusion of other plants. This is a definite loss from the ranching viewpoint, since this grass has a conspicuous flower-head but very scanty leafage. None of the savannahs between here and Roraima is stocked. At Roraima itself the Venezuelan Boundary Commission kept a small herd for beef. From the village of Ipiasiau, on the Ireng, until we emerged into the upland savannah at the foot of the Roraima, we traversed almost continuous forest.

#### *The Brazilian Savannahs of the Rio Branco.*

The return route from Roraima to the Uraricuera and thence, via Boa Vista to the Rupununi again, traversed savannah country almost entirely. In keeping with the successive changes in elevation and geological structure these savannahs showed a much greater variety of vegetation than those of the Rupununi. As one approached the Uraricuera and the Takutu Rivers, especially the Rio Branco itself, they differed also in being much more heavily stocked; so much so that, as already indicated, there are considerable areas in which pasture deterioration has proceeded to its climax in pure stands of entirely inedible weeds (especially *Sida* and *Ipomoea crassicaulis*). In spite of this the types of cattle and horses throughout the Brazilian savannahs are usually markedly superior to those of the Rupununi.

The Hamilton Rice-Harvard Medical Expedition was very impressed by the wide prevalence of deficiency diseases and digestive troubles among the Brazilians of the Rio Branco savannahs. Thus Hamilton Rice writes that "the deleterious effects of the present ill-balanced, malnutritious dietary are very apparent in the generally adynamic condition of the majority of individuals presenting themselves for medical examination, advice and treatment." The regular diet consists almost exclusively of cassava farine and meat, chiefly in the dried form. I was particularly struck by the great contrast offered by the evident health of the savannah Indians living under very similar conditions and on the same diet—with this difference, that the Indians consume vast quantities cashiri, paiwari, parakari and other fermenting (rather than fermented) drinks, exceedingly rich in yeasts. The "civilizados" largely scorn these concoctions, and at the most drink them only when they visit Indian settlements. Personal experience indicated immediate benefit from these drinks whenever the above diet began to tell on the visitor. It seems eminently probable that their high vitamin content is a great factor in



producing and maintaining the incomparably better health of the Indians. *Capsicum* peppers, which form such a regular, and to some palates, excessive feature of Indian diet, have lately been proved exceedingly rich in Vitamin C.

#### *The Kanuku Mountains.*

The Kanuku Mountains, which split the Rupununi savannahs into two, are very much less known biologically than Roraima. At their summits, from 2,000 to 2,500 feet, are a few areas of savannah land showing the same vegetation as that which occurs at similar elevations in the Pakaraimas, e.g., just north of Ichilibar.

The most interesting find in the Kanukus, however, was a large "reef" of true wild cacao, shown me by Mr. John Melville. Its presence was first pointed out in this region by Mr. John Ogilvie. It is hoped to study this cacao at a later date, with a view to obtaining data on and perhaps assistance in the biological control of cacao pests. It is curious that unlike the wild cacao examined by the writer on an affluent of the Coppename River in Dutch Guiana several years ago, these Kanuku trees were apparently entirely free from witchbroom disease though belonging to exactly the same uniform type as the Surinaam trees. They were in fact in a highly flourishing condition, but there was evidence that most of the pods were taken by monkeys, which are unusually abundant in these mountains.

#### *The Cattle Trail.*

The cattle trail from the Rupununi savannahs to those of the Berbice is a magnificent piece of work. The main problem still connected with it seems to be an entirely ecological one, namely, to grow pasturage in the holding-paddocks *en route*, which, on the one hand, will endure during the dry season periodic heavy stocking and trampling, and, on the other hand, withstand during the whole of the wet season the competition of the forest second-growth. The former is rendered exceptionally difficult by the loose sand which is the predominant soil from Kurupukari downwards. Several of the holding-paddocks were as bare as a sea-beach.

It might be suggested that plants other than grasses and the usual legumes be investigated for feeding qualities and palatability, especially those which form common constituents of second-growth forest on the cattle trail or in other parts of the colony. In New Zealand it is customary in certain districts to tide the dairy cattle over bad times by felling and feeding to them the foliage of some of the forest trees, notably *Griselinia littoralis*, and the introduced willow (*Salix* spp.). On the trail we were informed that where pasture was lacking we could feed the pack-bullocks with trumpet-tree (*Cecropia*) and turu palm (*Oenocarpus*).

The former is a common second-growth plant, and it would not be difficult to grow pure stands of it on cleared forest land, where browsing itself would keep it short enough to obviate felling. But we found that only with the greatest difficulty could our pack animals be persuaded to eat either of these plants. Major Bone informs me that considerable patience is necessary to accustom the savannah cattle to this strange food. Under these circumstances, the establishment of grass paddocks is naturally the only course. The pack-bullocks ate young bracken (*Pteridium esculentum*) and several unidentified forest trees more readily than the above two plants.

In conclusion, though this is not the place to acknowledge the assistance freely given by numerous authorities and ranchers on the Brazilian and Venezuelan sides, I should like to express my appreciation and gratitude for the very great and enthusiastic help and courtesies rendered to us by the ranchers of the Rupununi, the Commissioner, Mr. Haynes, the Land Officer, Mr. E. E. Melville, and the Chief and Secretary of the British Boundary Commission. The identification of the grasses was kindly made, or at least confirmed, by Dr. A. S. Hitchcock.

#### 8.—Notes on the Rupununi District, with especial Reference to Soil Fertility.

##### *General Position.*

The Rupununi district comprises a large tract, yet very few scientific officers have been able to examine it personally; Bone and Myers are the only two who have done so. Summaries of their views and reports are given hereunder.

Myers, in discussing the Rupununi savannahs, states *inter alia*:—

"The Rupununi savannahs as a whole are as yet unspoiled, the vast bulk of their vegetation consisting of grass, which, while not eminently palatable in its older stages on account of coarseness and toughness, is yet eaten regularly by cattle, and must form one of their mainstays. The older settled savannahs of Brazil and Venezuela, however, undoubtedly indicate the changes which may be expected if stocking is increased in the Rupununi anywhere near to capacity without the provision of fences or other means for the correct management and rotation of pastures. . . . The Kurasabai savannah is extensive, and is remarkable for a much more varied grass vegetation than the main Rupununi. Among these other grasses are evidently some which form exceptionally good fodder." Later on, however, he states: "In spite of this, the types of cattle and horses throughout the Brazilian savannahs are usually marked superior to those of the Rupununi."

In commenting on the remarks of Myers, Bone states:—

"Dr. Myers concludes that the more varied grazing of the Kurasabai accounts for their superiority, but the superiority is due to breed and not to improved pasture. This is a point which should be stressed—the Rupununi pasture in its present condition can carry animals of improved breed; attempts to improve the pasture can follow."

Bone—Sessional Paper No. 6/31 on "Tour of the Savannahs of the Rupununi District and the Cattle Trail"—states:—

"There could be no better introduction to the savannahs, whether approached by river or trail, than Annai during the month of February. Undulating grassland, surrounded by forest-clad hills and a cool savannah breeze, have an immediate invigorating effect. The view from the police camp, two miles from Annai River landing, is one of great beauty, and later, when it is realised that all the rivers and creeks, of which there are many, abound with fish, and that almost any kind of fruit and vegetable can be easily grown, one is astounded that so very little is known of the attractions of the district by coast residents only 200 miles distant. Nature has endowed Rupununi with necessities and luxuries possessed by few other countries. Its many and great advantages have not been described, whereas any minor disadvantage it possesses has been exaggerated. The climate is healthy, the opportunities for development of savannahs and mountains are many; only capital and settlers are required."

It is obvious that both these writers regard the area entirely from a pasture point of view.

##### *Analyses of Soil Samples.*

Numerous soil samples collected by various Government officers have been sent to Georgetown for analysis. The conclusions of the various officers are given hereunder.

Harrison—Combined Court Paper No. 774. "Analytical Examination of Samples of Soils from the Rupununi Savannah District, 1914"—states:—

"The samples sent by the commissioner, if, as he states they are, truly representative of the districts, indicate that by far the largest portion of the area is a coarse sandy soil of low fertility, apparently at present suited only to the production of coarse grasses for pastoral or ranching purposes. Its very unfavourable physical condition does not hold out any hopes of its ready amelioration by ordinary local cultural methods. Where it is traversed by rivers and streams and their banks are subject to flooding, the soils are fertile and produce a 'lush' grass after such flooding. In places there are hollows or shallow depressions in the savannahs, where the soils are of considerable to high fertility, capable of producing many varieties of tropical products; whilst the savannahs are traversed by ridges or so-called 'islands' of land the soil of which, from its physical nature, is of well-marked fertility."

In 1925 Harrison submitted a further memorandum entitled "Compositions of the Samples of Soils collected during the Cattle Trail Survey between the



Berbice River and the Canister Falls, Demerara River," and in it he deals with the Rewa and Rupununi Rivers' soils. In the discussion he states, *inter alia*—

"Several of the soils, for instance, those of the Rewa River District, Nos. 1, 3 and 5, and those from the Rupununi River District, Nos. 7, 8, 13 and 14, are fluvial or riparian soils of the colony by well-marked potential fertility. If properly drained and skilfully cultivated these soils should yield satisfactory crops of many tropical agricultural products. Others of them, such as Nos. 2, 4, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18 and 20, are of very low fertility and are for all practical purposes more or less sterile. They doubtless would support a sparse vegetation of coarse savannah grass, shrubs and low trees. . . . In common with the great majority of soils from the interior of the colony I have examined, these soils are markedly deficient in their content of calcium oxide (lime), and especially of phosphoric anhydride soluble in hydrochloric acid. It is probable that in these sandy soils minute crystals and fragments of highly insoluble phosphatic minerals, such as apatite or monazite, occur, but such resistant minerals could have very little, if any, immediately beneficial effect on the fertility of the soils. I am satisfied that, even in the case of the more fertile of them, it will be absolutely necessary for permanent cultivation to dress the land with phosphatic manures, preferably with slag-phosphate or with substances of similar nature. . . .

"The sandy soils of the Rupununi savannahs with coarse herbage growing in tussocks, or even when covered by a short growth of soft grass after being flooded in the wet season, offer a more or less precarious sustenance to cattle allowed to roam over their practically unrestricted areas; but as grazing-grounds their value is governed by the depth of the water-table below the soil. Where the water-table is at a comparatively low depth the herbage will be of a better character and more luxurious in growth than it is elsewhere and will retain this character to a varying extent during the dry season."

In 1931, Follett-Smith submitted a report on the laboratory examination of fifteen soil samples from the Rupununi District. His conclusions are as follows:—

"The laboratory examination of soil samples from the Rupununi District indicates that none of the soils possess a high level of fertility. There are marked deficiencies of lime and available phosphate and in some cases of available potash. The area appears to be better suited to cattle ranching than to the cultivation of marketable crops. It is possible that provisions, vegetables and fruit trees may be grown upon selected areas at the mountain foot and upon the site of the abandoned corrals where the savannah soil has received liberal additions of manure. It would be of great interest to examine representative samples of pasturage collected from different areas upon the savannah."

Bone, in commenting on this, states:—

"The samples analysed by the chemist-ecologist represent the soils found in various parts of the Rupununi District of limited extent, but it does not appear that a sample typical of the soil of the large savannahs has been sent for analysis."

It appears, therefore, as is usually the case when one officer collects the samples and another examines them, that there is considerable doubt as to whether most of these soil samples are truly representative of the Rupununi. It seemed that Harrison placed greater confidence in the soils collected by Anderson and reported on in his memorandum on the cattle trail. His comments have been quoted in paragraph 7 above.

In addition, we have Harrison's opinion in a memorandum dated the 2nd May, 1924, as follows:—

"Its sole potentiality is ranching . . . I also enclose a report I made on the examination of certain samples of soils from the Rupununi District in 1914. I sent a copy of this report to Buitenzorg, Java, for criticism by the Dutch tropical soil experts, with the result that the authorities there held that my views were unduly optimistic. They could perceive no agricultural

future for these Rupununi savannahs soils. . . . I had examined a large number, over 200, of samples of soils collected by the Cattle Trail Survey party and am preparing a report on them. I have never before examined a series of such hopelessly sterile soils as these are."

Coupled with this there is the evidence of Mr. McTurk given before the West India Royal Commission, which is of interest (Appendix C, Vol. II, Part II, p. 24):—

339. And it is really well suited for cattle?—It is not fit for anything else.

340. It is well suited for cattle?—At times the grass is 6 feet high, and nothing will eat it. The Indians put fire to it, and the deer eat it up as it springs up after the fire. If the cattle were there to tramp that grass down, other and better kinds would thrive. The Para grass only grows near streams, because the other grass chokes it. If the cattle were there to tramp down the long grass, the Para grass would spread.

341. Cattle and forest products are really the only resources which would be gained by opening up the country?—Not only that, it would give access to a country which is undoubted auriferous, and it would open up the country.

342. (Sir David Barbour.) Do you think that the beef produced on the savannahs would be equal to the beef produced in colder climates, North America, for instance?—Oh no, it would only be for home consumption, they might export hides and hoofs and horns. The kind of cattle that grow in this climate would never be able to compete with northern cattle.

Further, Mr. Harvey-Read, when land officer in the Rupununi, in a report dated the 26th May, 1930, stated:—

"Very little agricultural work is carried on in the district. One or two ranchers have 'fields' and grow a little corn and cassava, but never enough even for their own consumption. One rancher has just started experimenting with tobacco."

Numerous samples of pasturage grass from interior have been analysed and the general conclusion is that they are all of inferior quality as regards mineral constituents, such as phosphates and lime, but that Rupununi grasses are slightly superior to those of the Yawakuri savannahs, which, in their turn, are better than those of the Waranama savannahs. The number of pasture grasses taken were as follows:—

Takutu: 2 samples.

Yawakuri: 1 sample.

Waranama: 7 samples. (The results of this were published in *Agricultural Journal*, Vol. III, No. 3, pp. 142-159, 1930.)

It is possible that certain of the riparian lands of the Rupununi district are fairly fertile since a recent report, submitted by the chemist-ecologist on samples of soil collected by the commissioner from Bon Success, indicates that there is a certain area of calcareous (more desirable) soil on the banks of the Tabatinga Creek, Takutu River. It is possible that extended search would reveal other similar areas.

#### Summary.

Generally speaking, the district is considered to be suited to pastoral pursuits, but is not likely to be agriculturally promising. It is of interest to quote Myers:—

"The Hamilton Rice-Harvard Medical Expedition was very impressed by the wide prevalence of deficiency diseases and digestive troubles among the Brazilians of the Rio Branco savannahs. Thus Hamilton Rice writes that the 'deleterious effects of the present ill-balanced, malnutritious dietary are very apparent in the generally adynamic condition of the majority of



individuals presenting themselves for medical examination, advice and treatment.' The regular diet consists almost exclusively of cassava farine and meat, chiefly in the dried form. I was particularly struck by the great contrast offered by the evident health of the savannah Indians, living under very similar conditions and on the same diet—with this difference, that the Indians consume vast quantities of cashiri, paiwari, parakari and other fermenting (rather than fermented) drinks, exceedingly rich in yeasts. The 'civilizados' largely scorn these concoctions, and, at the most, drink them only when they visit Indian settlements. Personal experience indicated immediate benefit from these drinks, whenever the above diet began to tell on the visitor. It seems eminently probable that their high vitamin content is a great factor in producing and maintaining the incomparably better health of the Indians.

If the medical expedition was so impressed by the wide prevalence of deficiency diseases and, if, as Dr. Myers states, the regular diet consists almost exclusively of farine and dried meat, then it is difficult to accept the statement of other visitors that the land is extremely fertile and capable of supporting almost any kind of fruit and vegetable. It must be remembered that few scientific officers have visited the district and that reliable information as to its potentialities is scanty.

(Confidential.)

9.—Notes by Major T. Bone, Government Veterinary Surgeon.

Your Excellency,

I have perused the file, and hope that the following notes will be of assistance:—

#### *Seclusion.*

1. The district is even more secluded than is stated, and, if necessary, could be entirely shut off from the Rio Branco district by means of patrols.

I have previously given consideration to this matter in case it was rendered necessary by outbreaks of animal disease in Brazil, and in light of experience in other countries with less well defined borders I could see no difficulty.

#### *Communication.*

2. At the same time, communication with the Amazon can be made easy.

3. Transport via Manaus to Boa Vista and thence to the Rupununi district should be an easy matter if there were no international complications.

#### *Area.*

4. There are 7,000 square miles (estimated) of chief savannahs—personally, I think the area is very much larger. There are also other areas in the mountains suitable for grazing, but at present difficult of access.

#### *Pioneers.*

5. I suggest that the first party should be chiefly a pioneer section, made up of carpenters, blacksmiths and similar artificers, but also containing a number of agriculturists or, preferably, pastoralists.

#### *Self-supporting Families.*

6. A family should be self-supporting when it has a house, garden, a number of cows, sheep, pigs and poultry.

Under these conditions, Mr. Orella, a rancher, now with the Boundary Commission, estimated the cost of living for a family of four at 10 dollars per month, the expenditure being on coffee, tea, sugar, salt, &c.

If cows, sheep, pigs and poultry are provided for settlers they should be self-supporting in two years, and if improved bulls are supplied they should be in a position to trade for profit in five years.

#### *Fruits and Vegetables.*

7. Fruits and vegetables are grown by the present settlers near the homesteads.

On one of my visits to Dadanawa the supply of bananas was so great they were fed to pigs.

#### *Rice.*

8. Mr. Hart grows rice on the savannahs for sale in Brazil.

#### *Tobacco.*

9. Tobacco is grown in several places.

#### *Lack of Interest of present Settlers for Agriculture.*

10. Generally, the present settlers are not interested in agriculture because there is no market. The cost of transport to the coast under present conditions is prohibitive, and it is easy for them to obtain supplies of corn from Aboriginal Indians by barter.

By this I do not mean that the savannahs are good agricultural country, but rather that, had it been necessary, the settlers could have grown more crops.

#### *Indian Gardens.*

11. The gardens of the Aboriginal Indians on the savannahs are small, but apparently supply all the food required—cassava.

#### *Hill Agriculture.*

12. The valleys of the hills are fertile, otherwise the Indians would have nothing on which to live and could not use their produce for barter.

The Seven Day Adventist missionaries informed me that they had no difficulty in growing either rice or wheat. When in Georgetown, they were searching for hulling machinery for the use of Indians.

#### *Grouping to avoid clash between Agriculturists and Pastoralists.*

13. When and if close settlement is made, the settlers may divide into groups in the mountain valleys engaged mainly in agriculture, and groups on the savannahs growing tobacco or specialising in cattle or sheep.

14. It is noted that highland country is preferable. In many ways this may simplify settlement.

Small groups of settlers might be placed in the hills of the Pakaraima mountains, with grazing lands below, and also in the Kanuku mountains, with grazing on both the north and south sides.

#### *Water Supply.*

15. There are rivers and many creeks on the savannahs, and judging by the mountain valleys I penetrated there should be no lack of running water in the hills.

#### *Mineral Deficiency in Human Beings.*

16. Phosphorus deficiency: as I pointed out to the late Mr. Montgomery, Adviser on Animal Health, although there was a general phosphorus deficiency it was only in one area that one could definitely say the cattle suffered. This was in Mr. Hart's area. Mr. Hart had there five children, all of whom were well grown and strong. A diet of fish was common.

The Melville families reared on the savannahs are well grown. I saw no sign of mineral deficiency amongst vaqueros and other savannah Indians.

A deposit of lime has been discovered 2 miles from Bon Success.

The savannah Indians consume a tremendous amount of meat. The bones of the many carcasses, as I've previously advised, could be burnt and used to provide the deficient phosphorus.



*Sheep.*

17. Mr. John Melville imported sheep from Brazil, and they did exceedingly well.

On the northern savannah, Mr. Orella imported sheep and had success.

But, for sheep, I think there are better prospects in the hills or about the foothills.

*Pigs.*

Pigs do well everywhere and forage for themselves.

18. No one has ever imported improved bulls on a commercial basis, nor, unless it has happened since my last visit, has an improved bull been given a fair chance. Yet, where dams have been properly herded the results have been excellent.

*Pasture.*

The pasture may not be ideal, but without improvement it is capable of carrying improved stock. I saw no pasture in Rhodesia, Portuguese East Africa, the Union or South-West Africa to equal that of the Rupununi.

*Improvement of Breed of Cattle.*

19. For improvement of cattle I strongly recommend the Hereford. The cross will provide ample milk for local requirements, although the Hereford is a purely beef breed.

*Cattlemen.*

20. *Displacement of Cattlemen.*—I think the Rupununi Company will be glad to go. They have not the necessary capital for development. I do not think any other settler in the district has the necessary capital to develop their holdings. All of them would probably be in a better position if their holdings were one-tenth the size.

*Barbed Wire.*

21. Barbed wire and bulls are required.

22. It would probably be convenient to group the families in fives, allowing 5 miles per family group.

*Close Settlement.*

23. Guatemala grass will grow even on Wallaba sand, and its cultivation will allow of close settlement if necessary.

*Type of Dwelling.*

24. Temporary accommodation for families—the type of house to which they are accustomed is not known. If a plan could be procured these could be easily erected. Mr. Hart has machinery for sawing boards, &c., and a large workshop, but to expedite the work more machinery will be required.

25. *Transport to District.*—There need be no hardship.

1. *Main Base Camp.*—Mazaruni station or Tiger timber camp. I understand that there is no malaria at the timber camp.

2. *Embarkation Camp.*—Bartica, Mazaruni River side.

3. *Rest Camp A.*—At Mr. Pires rest camp (77 M?).

4. *Rest Camp B.*—Tumatumari.

5. *Embarkation Camp Boat.*—Junction of Potaro and Essequibo Rivers.

*Alternative Route.*—Wismar base; Rockstone, embarkation point.

6. *Night Rest Camps.*—On Essequibo River, with mid-day halts.

7. *Main Rest Camp.*—Kurupukari.

8. *Advance Base.*—Annai, near river for water supply.

*Convenient Advanced Bases.*—Yupukari, Bon Success, Bara Bowk (near Whicherbai).

*Transport of Settlers.*—By river.

*Transport of Rations.*—By river.

*Transport of Heavy Material.*—Pack oxen by trail.

26. *Survey.*—1st Northern Savannah in blocks of 5 sq. miles; 2nd Pakaraima Range; 3rd Kanaku Range; 4th Southern Savannah, in blocks; 5th Out-spans and watering places.

27. *Land Required.*—Suggest grouping families in fives and allowing each group 5 sq. miles—this will be governed by water supply.

Allow 10 acres per animal under present conditions, or 64 to the square mile.

28. *Food Supply for Two or Three Years.*—Beef supply available, provided Government takes over all cattle or controls prices.

Rice from the coast.

Pioneer sections working in mountain valleys and selected areas of savannah should be able to supplement or take over supply of rice, corn, cassava, in one and a half years (Section (6)).

29. Home supplies of fruit and vegetables.

The present settlers and Indians, with very little work, can supply their households.

30. *Possible Markets.*—Tobacco has been grown and sold at a profit.

With improved transport facilities, export of sheep to the coast.

With improved beef cattle, West Indies.

Exploitation of hill valleys may reveal agricultural possibilities not yet known.

At the present time settlers can make themselves self-supporting, and can build up herds and flocks for export.

I have, &c.

T. BONE.

August 5, 1934.

# 10.—Notes on Rupununi Colonisation.

*Areas Suitable.*

Along the left bank of the "Ireng" River as far as where the river enters the "Pakaraima Mountains" within the Pakaraima Mountains in the creek valleys where there are small areas of suitable soil. But personally I think it would be advisable to leave all the country along the upper reaches of the Ireng River, starting from the mouth of the "Yurora Creek" as an Indian reserve.

Along both banks of the "Poiara Creek," except the low lands that flood during the rains. On the rolling lands between the Pirara Creek and the Moco Moco Creek, which is intersected by the Manari Creeks and the Tapatinga Creek. All the higher land between the Moco Moco Creek, the foot of the Kamuka Mountains, and the Takuta River up to the "Yumati Wau" Creek. The large tract of land between the Kanuku Mountains and the Takutu River, through which runs the "Sawari Wau" Creek.

Then along the banks of the Rupununi River, from where it comes out of the mountains, taking in the large area between the Rupununi and the Takutu, and between the Rupununi and the bush line of the Essequibo.

*Water.*

Throughout the above-mentioned areas there is ample water for stock and domestic purposes along the river and the following creeks, which do not dry out, but which in very dry years do not form running creeks, but form into a series of pools. The Pirara, Mauari, Nappie, Moco Moco, Coumoo, Yumati Wau, Sawari Wau and other creeks of which I do not remember the names. There are certain areas that have ample water for stock, supplied by ponds, but for domestic purposes wells would have to be bored or dug, but these would be comparatively shallow wells.



*Soil.*

The Rupununi Savannas consist of large flats (which flood to a depth of from 1 to 4 feet in the rainy season, that is from the 15th May to the 15th September), and rolling high land, getting rougher as you get nearer the mountains.

The flat lands are made of more or less a sandy loam, and, in some places, a rich-looking black loamy soil.

The higher lands are mostly a brown sandy soil, which, with the aid of manure, has been proved to produce quite well.

There is also quite a lot of hilly country, made up of poor grade bauxite gravel very heavily iron stained, on which soil citrus fruits do very well.

*Cultivation.*

The large flat areas in the Rupununi, that flood over in the rainy season, have never been experimented with to find out whether crops could be grown after the water had taken off, but I see no reason why, with fairly deep ploughing and proper cultivation, it should not be turned into production land.

The rolling lands that are covered with sandpaper tree and other scrub trees, are, as a rule, found to be quite good soil, and, with the help of manure, produce vegetables, greens and fruits very well.

*Products to Plant.*

The mainstay of the Rupununi, as far as human food is concerned, is "Farinha," which is made from the bitter cassava, and this grows very well on the sandy soil. Sweet potatoes, beans, lettuce, cabbage, corn and all fruit trees do very well.

*Stock.*

Cattle are, of course, the main thing in the Rupununi, but sheep and chickens also do well, and hogs also thrive well, especially near the ite swamps, of which there are a great many in the Rupununi.

*Trades.*

Regarding the tanning of hides, there are several kinds of bark which have been tried and found to make very good leather, for which there is quite a good demand for saddlery purposes.

Straw hats made from ite palm is also an industry that should have good results. Carpenters and blacksmiths are also in demand and would be a great aid if the scheme goes through.

*Housing.*

The type of house mostly used and found to be cool and inexpensive to build is the adobe house with the ite palm roof. This type of house does not take very much lumber, which has always been a difficulty to get in the Rupununi, that is, at a reasonable price.

*General Health.*

The Rupununi is, in my opinion, the healthiest part of the colony, and in the years I have lived there there has been little or no sickness among the section of the community that have sense enough to take ordinary health precautions, which is just as well, as there is no such thing as a doctor in the district.

Regarding the lack of minerals in the soil, this seems to have no effect on the health of the human element, as I have seen some very healthy families born and raised in the district, and I think that, as far as the cattle are concerned, that *inbreeding* has more to do with the inferiority of some than has the lack of mineral in the soil.

My candid opinion is that the Rupununi district will never be developed any other way than by dividing it into small holdings, putting in a Government stock-breeding farm to improve the stock at present there, and I see no reason why, in the future, provided the settlers are prepared to work, they should not be able to make a comfortable living.

CYRIL C. KING.

*Estimate of Cost of District Administration in Rupununi.*

<i>Personal Emoluments.</i>		Dollars.	Dollars.
District commissioner	...	4,800	
2 assistant district commissioners at 2,400 dollars	...	4,800	
(*) 4 clerical assistants at 360 dollars	...	1,440	
Wages—			
(*) (i) Boathands (5)	...	1,236	
(*) (ii) Temporary boathands	...	750	
Total personal emoluments	...		13,026

*Other Charges.*

Commuted field, travelling and horse allowance to commissioner at 960 dollars	...	2,880	
Travelling expenses and subsistence allowance	...	990	
Ration allowance to temporary boat-crew	...	350	
Maintenance and running expense of boats and motors	...	650	
Uniforms for R.C. boatmen	...	50	
Miscellaneous	...	100	
Total other charges	...		5,020
(*) Special expenditure—			
Purchase of twelve horses...	...	420	
Total	...		5,440

23,486

Total personnel, 12. Approximately, 24,000 dollars = £5,000.

The district commissioner and one assistant commissioner should be specially selected officers.

This estimate is subject to revision in light of discussion with mission which may visit district.

*Copy of Memorandum from the Hon. J. Mullin, Commissioner of Lands and Mines, to the Colonial Secretary, dated August 18, 1934.*

Subject: *Visit of Inspection to Rupununi District.*

With reference to the attached minute on the above subject, (\*) the best and cheapest way would, I think, be via the Demerara River to Canister Falls, where the District Commissioner, Mr. Haynes, could arrange to meet the party with horses and droghers to convey them and their supplies to Kurapukari.

2. From Kurapukari they could go by road to Annai on the Rupununi River, where additional horses (riding and pack animals) could be held in readiness by the District Commissioner for the overland journey to Dadanawa. The heavy baggage, stores, &c., could go to Annai by the District Commissioner's boat.

3. After a look round at Annai the party would proceed on horseback and with pack animals and bullock-cart to Dadanawa, stopping at suitable intervals for excursions about the country. With Dadanawa as a centre, the party could make extensive tours of the southern savannahs.

4. The return journey should be made overland via the Ireng Valley to Kaieteur, as the possibilities for small cultivators in the valleys and on the laterite soils in the forest in this region are of prime importance.

5. A rough time schedule is attached, which indicates that the round trip could be done in sixty-four days. This should be subject to revision by

(\*) These might be Assyrians.

(\*) It may not be necessary to purchase any horses.  
(\*) Not printed.



Mr. Haynes, who should also work out details of the excursions from the various stopping points; but I think it will suffice as a general guide.

6. The estimate of cost, which is also attached, presumes that the Lands and Mines launch, with a boat in tow for men and luggage, will be used for the journey from Wismar to Great Falls, but it must be distinctly understood that the launch and boat will return from that point immediately, as they are required for Lands and Mines and Commissary's work in the Demerara River district.

7. I have allowed for four boys to be taken from the coast, two personal attendants and two boat hands, who have been trained for work with the geologists in measuring lines by cyclometer, collecting specimens, &c. At Kurupukari Mr. Haynes will be able to supply any additional labour required.

8. Indian droghers will be required in the Ireng Valley and on the journey to Kaieteur Foot.

9. On the occasion of Major Bone's first visit to the district with Mr. Haynes, via Essequibo River, the amount paid to Garnet and Co. for boat hire alone was 1,130 dollars.

(Signed) J. MULLIN.

#### Time Schedule.

Outward Journey.	Days.
Georgetown to Wismar	1
Wismar to Mallali—including passing boats through rapids	1
Mallali to Appaparu or Kanaimapoo	1
Appaparu to Great Falls and transferring load over portage	1
Great Falls to Canister Falls (cattle trail)	1
Canister Falls to Kurupukari, by trail	1
At Kurupukari, examining camp site and rearranging loads	1
Kurupukari to Annai by trail—baggage and supplies by boat	3
At Annai, rest and examine surrounding country	2
Annai to Kwaimatta	1
Kwaimatta to Pirara (Hart's ranch)	1
At Pirara, examining surrounding country	3
Pirara to Bon Success	1
At Bon Success, visiting surrounding country, mountain foot, &c.	2
Bon Success to Swariwan (Shea village)	1
Swariwan to Dadanawa	1
At Dadanawa, visiting surrounding country—including new gold area	5
Allowance for rest and contingencies	4
	—31
Return Journey.	
Dadanawa to Pirara	3
At Pirara, arranging transport to Ireng Valley	2
Pirara to Karassabai	2
Karassabai to Echililar	2
At Echililar, inspecting surrounding country (Wandaik, &c.)	3
Echililar to Puwa and Kurikabaru, &c.	5
At Kurikabaru, inspecting surrounding country	2
Kurikabaru to Anandabaru, via Santa Maria	2
Anandabaru to Kaieteur	3
	—24
Kaieteur to Georgetown	5
Allowance for rest and contingencies	4
Total	64

#### Estimate of Cost.

(Subject to revision by District Commissioner.)

	Dollars.
Fares, &c. to Wismar	18 00
Fuel and oil for launch, Wismar to Great Falls and back, and ration allowance for boat's crew	56 00
Wages and rations—4 men for 64 days at 1 00 dollar	256 00
Hire of horses—10 for 60 days, or purchase and subsequent sale, as may be cheaper	600 00
Vaqueros—4 for 60 days	173 00
Ox waggon and team, Annai to Dadawana and back to Pirara	150 00
Droghers in areas inaccessible to horses—30 men for 15 days at 72 cents per day	405 00
Transport from Kaieteur to Garraway Stream	200 00
Contingencies, rations, medical stores, fares, &c.	200 00
Total expenses	2,058 00
Subsistence allowances—	
4 officers for 64 days at 2 75 dollars per day	702 00
Grand total	2,760 00

#### Copy of Executive Council Minute dated August 10, 1934.

*Settlement of Assyrians in the Rupununi.*—The Officer Administering the Government stated that he had asked members to attend this special meeting to consider the proposals set out in the Secretary of State's confidential despatch of the 13th July with regard to settling some thousands of Assyrians at present living in Iraq in British Guiana.

The Colonial Secretary outlined the proposals and pointed out that the Secretary of State is asking for a preliminary reply by telegram as regards the practicability of the scheme and the attitude the people of this colony are likely to adopt towards it.

His Excellency stated that he considered the Rupununi District the most suitable for the proposed settlement, and suggested that an area of about 13,000 square miles (shown on a map before Council) be set aside for this settlement. Access thereto might be by way of the Bartica-Potaro Road to Tumatumari, then by boat to Kurupukari, there joining the existing cattle trail to the Rupununi. An alternative route would be for the ocean steamer bringing the settlers to disembark them at a camp to be built at Wismar, whence they could be conveyed by suitable craft up the Demerara River, but there would have to be a portage at the Great Falls. From Cannister Falls passengers would travel by the Rupununi trail via Kurupukari. From the reports available at present, it appeared that tobacco, scientifically grown, might be established in the district as a crop, and that crops of vegetables, &c., can be grown at the foothills of the mountains. He proposed to ask the Secretary of State to approve of a commission, consisting of an agricultural officer, surveyor and the soil chemist, being appointed and despatched to the district, say, a month before Brigadier-General Browne arrives to inspect the area. It seemed to him desirable that some publicity be given to the scheme. The present residents of the Rupununi would then be aware of the proposals before the arrival of the brigadier-general and the commission in the district, and much additional useful information could be collected.

He would be glad of the advice of Council as to whether the people of this colony would be likely to offer any objection to this settlement, and as to whether members of Council were in favour of the matter being discussed in Legislative Council upon a message addressed to the Council followed by a motion.

After discussion, members of Council were unanimously, unreservedly and enthusiastically in favour of the project, and advised that the Secretary of State be informed that it is considered the scheme is a practical one and his approval sought by telegram to the matter being communicated to the Legislative Council with a view to a motion being passed welcoming the proposals in general terms.



They were of opinion that great advantage would accrue to the Colony from the settlement in many directions, *e.g.*, the increase in population, the provision of employment, publicity to the Colony and the money put into circulation. It was suggested that—

- (a) Every effort be made to secure an equality of the sexes amongst the emigrants (one of the disadvantages of past immigration schemes had been an excessive proportion of males).
- (b) It is stipulated that Brigadier-General Browne satisfy himself as to the suitability of the area for the settlement, especially in view of the fact that there is no possibility of any of the Assyrians being repatriated.
- (c) It be made a condition that maintenance be provided for the settlers for the first two years after their arrival.
- (d) Funds be provided for a definite number of years from which to meet all current expenses on services for the settlers, *e.g.*, hospital, police (the proximity of the Brazil boundary will necessitate smuggling prevention measures), prisons, &c.
- (e) As an alternative route there be considered the desirability of continuing the Potaro Konawaruk trail to and along the left bank of the Essequibo River to join the Rupununi cattle trail and so avoid crossing the Essequibo River twice.
- (f) Arrangements be made for all settlers to be recently vaccinated against small-pox (and inoculated against enteric to be considered) before arrival in British Guiana.
- (g) The Surgeon-General consider the reports made by the medical officer attached to the British Guiana-Brazil Boundary Commission engaged in the district.
- (h) That the Secretary of State be asked to consider sending out a civilian officer with full knowledge of the agricultural requirements and capabilities of the settlers, if it is not considered that Brigadier-General Browne is sufficiently acquainted with their requirements in this respect.

[E 5681/1038/93]

No. 56.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received September 10)*

(No. 507.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, August 29, 1934.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 199, I have the honour to report that the Jamil Madfai Cabinet resigned on the 26th August and that the King on the following day entrusted the office of Prime Minister to his private secretary, Ali Jaudat Beg Al Ayubi, who has formed a Government as follows. The figures in brackets indicate the number in the Personalities List enclosed in Sir Francis Humphrys's despatch No. 4 of the 4th January:—

Prime Minister and Minister of Interior (Acting): Ali Jaudat-al-Ayubi (16).

Minister of Finance: Yusuf Beg Ghanima (90).

Minister for Foreign Affairs: Nuri Pasha As Said (75).

Minister of Justice: Jamil Beg Baban (45).

Minister of Defence: Jamil Beg Al Madfai (47).

Minister of Economics and Communications: Arshad Beg Al Umari (20).

Minister of Education: Abdul Husain-al-Chalabi (6).

2. No special incident has provoked this change of Government, the exact reasons for which are not clear. The late Prime Minister is of a slow and stubborn nature and more through listlessness than anything else permitted the routine work of administration to be scamped or entirely neglected. This, together with his inability to make decisions, was in due course seized upon by rival politicians, including Nuri Pasha and Ali Jaudat, when they considered that the Government had had their due share of office and that it was now their turn.

3. In spite, however, of defects from which no Iraqi Government can claim immunity, the fact that the late Government, to the surprise of their

British advisers, actually voted a grant of a further sum of 17,000 dinars in aid of the universally detested Assyrians is a matter which should be recorded to their credit.

4. The press contains but meagre and platitudinous comment on the change of Government, and only one newspaper, somewhat belatedly, is trying to make capital out of the vote to the Assyrians. The Government have not yet issued a programme of work.

5. His Majesty King Ghazi was at pains to keep me informed in advance of the decisions he was about to take. He has quietly and tactfully performed the delicate task of uprooting a Prime Minister and persuading him to accept office of a lower status.

6. I am also glad to report that thanks to the frank representations of his British medical adviser, he has during the last two months succeeded in overcoming the temptations to alcoholic excess, the reports of which were causing immense harm and were even beginning to threaten the stability of the throne.

I have, &c.

G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

[E 5811/10/93]

No. 57.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received September 17.)*

(No. 529.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, September 6, 1934.*

WITH reference to Sir Francis Humphrys's despatch No. C.O. 742 of the 1st August, 1932, addressed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, I have the honour to report that the Acting Minister of the Interior has issued a notification ordering a general census of the population of Iraq to be taken beginning from the 15th September, 1934.

2. The local press in publishing this notification have not been slow to point to it as an indication that the new Cabinet intend to devote themselves seriously to the task of putting into effect the National Service Law, which has formed the subject of correspondence ending with your despatch No. 82 of the 5th February.

3. It is in fact true that the new census operations are being carried out as a preliminary to conscription. But Sir Kinahan Cornwallis informed me, as long ago as last July, that serious operations would be started with this object during the month of September, so that the present Cabinet cannot with justification claim credit for this step. Nor can it be regarded as an indication that they intend to take any hasty measures regarding the introduction of conscription.

I have, &c.

G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

[E 5716/1038/93]

No. 58.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received September 11.)*

(No. 531.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, September 6, 1934.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 507 of the 29th August, I have the honour to report that a Royal proclamation was issued to-day dissolving Parliament and directing the holding of a general election.

2. His Majesty the King has informed me recently that this step was contemplated in order to bring the Legislature more into line with the new Cabinet.

I have, &c.

GEORGE OGILVIE-FORBES.



[E 5971/1998/93]

No. 59.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received September 24.)*

(No. 538.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, September 11 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the 7th September was observed as the first anniversary of the death of King Feisal. Early in the morning King Ghazi visited and placed a wreath on his father's tomb, the customary prayers being read. The Prime Minister and the President of the Senate also laid wreaths.

2. The following day, the 8th September, was the first anniversary of King Ghazi's accession. At 6.30 A.M. His Majesty held a review of the Iraqi army. The ceremony was attended by several thousand people, including the Diplomatic Corps, the British Military Mission and representatives of the Royal Air Force, and was well carried out. His Majesty, who is a good horseman, made a favourable impression and was well received.

3. In the afternoon the Mayor of Bagdad gave a garden-party with fireworks. The King himself did not attend, but the Prime Minister, the President of the Senate, the Cabinet and the Diplomatic Corps were invited, together with many of the leading personalities in Iraq.

4. The harmony of this day's festivities was somewhat marred by the circulation of an anonymous letter denouncing the young King as a worthless creature by reason of alleged drunkenness, sexual excess and gambling. The police have arrested certain distributors of this letter, copies of which in several cases were sent to various personalities through the post. The authors have not yet been discovered.

I have, &amp;c.

G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

[E 5844/58/34]

No. 60.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received September 18.)*

(No. 540.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, September 11, 1934.*

IN your despatch No. 511 of the 30th July concerning the Iraq-Persia frontier question you requested my observations on the following points:—

(a) Whether or not His Majesty's Government should give diplomatic support to the Iraqi Government in their discussions with the Persian Government.

(b) Whether, if the necessity arose, His Majesty's Government should recommend to Iraq to appeal to the Council of the League of Nations in respect of the refusal of the Persian Government to recognise the frontier as laid down in 1914.

2. With regard to the first point, while it may be true that in the present state of Anglo-Persian relations the intervention of His Majesty's Government might not be effective—a matter on which I am not competent to express an opinion—I think that, from the local point of view here in Bagdad, the consideration that such intervention is prompted by a sense of compliance with the obligations laid upon us by the Treaty of Alliance outweighs such an objection. Generally speaking, and except when Iraq is threatened from outside, the Treaty of Alliance is considered here to be a one-sided instrument from which the Iraqis derive little benefit. Moreover, it has been unfortunately necessary for His Majesty's Government constantly to appeal to the treaty with a view to exacting compliance by Iraq with its provisions. It would, therefore, create a good impression and fortify our case in pressing the Iraqis to comply with the treaty if we on our side set an example of honouring obligations. Nevertheless, as the Iraqi Government have recently been at some pains to solicit our support over Persian affairs in general, I think it is desirable not to be too eager to

proffer it until it is requested over some specific matter. In such circumstances our help, for what it is worth, would be the more appreciated, and we would also have a lever for obtaining from Iraq our other desiderata.

3. With regard to the question of an appeal to the League and whether the formal offer of a Shatt-el-Arab Conservancy Board should precede or follow such a step, the present position appears to be that Persia is adopting a conciliatory attitude. But this may not last for long, and I have a suspicion that it is either due to disappointment on the part of the Shah with the result of his visit to Turkey, or to an attempt by Persia to detach Iraq from "imperialistic" (British) influences, of which we hear a good deal in this country nowadays. Be this what it may, it does not seem that this phase of conciliation will last long, as I understand that Persia is not prepared to agree to the Conservancy Board proposals, but insists on a rectification of the frontier. Therefore, the matter seems bound to come before the League sooner or later, and it is up to Iraq to choose the moment. It would also seem better tactics for Iraq to withhold the Conservancy Board proposal until her legal rights to the existing frontier have been vindicated, after which she might offer the Conservancy Board as her contribution to the compromise solution which the Council seems inevitably bound to seek. No doubt this latter aspect of the case has been studied, as it seems most unlikely that, however strong may be the Iraqi case, the Council would be prepared to give her 100 per cent. of her claim. On the whole, therefore, I think it would be a weakness on the part of Iraq to endeavour to throw the conservancy sop to the Shah, so long as he is determined on a frontier rectification. Let him first clearly be told by the Council of the League that he cannot have this and then by all means offer him the Conservancy Board as a means of soothing Persian feelings.

4. There are two points of detail to which I would draw your attention. It is hoped that in the near future Persia will not be in a position to claim control over any part of the Rookah Channel. If you refer to Chart No. 1235, you will observe a shaded patch north of the word "Hor" liable to dry at certain tides and thus to be claimed, so I understand, as a Persian island. Colonel Ward has informed me that this patch is being washed away by the combined tidal streams and river current which, by the gradual silting up of the western channel and the extension of the Abdullah Bank, are being canalised down the Rookah Channel. In fact, I understand that this patch has almost altogether disappeared, which, of course, means the pushing back to low-water mark on the mainland of the point from which the 3-mile limit would be measured. This would keep the whole of the Rookah Channel outside Persian territorial waters. One cannot, nevertheless, rely on this state of affairs continuing indefinitely, such are the vagaries of the river current. The dredging service is only too familiar with the constant and rapid formation of sandbanks at places least expected.

5. The second minor point, to which I would draw your attention, also refers to the river bed. In paragraph 7 of your despatch under reference it is stated that "Persia possesses sovereignty over the waters of the Shatt-el-Arab up to the *medium flum aquæ* (or at least up to the thalweg) at and above the junction of the Karun." If you will refer to p. 150 of the *Recueil des Procès-verbaux des Séances de la Commission de Délimitation de la Frontière turco-persane* (tableau descriptif . . .), you will observe that from Touweidjat to "borne No. 2," which comprises the section of the river in question, the frontier is drawn along the *medium flum aquæ*. Now, according to the latest information in my possession, derived from Colonel Ward, the present thalweg, which is after all the only thing that matters where shipping is concerned, is on the Iraqi side of the *medium flum aquæ*. So the position here does not seem so unfavourable to Iraq as would appear, although the Persians will no doubt try to make conditions as difficult as possible.

6. A copy of this despatch is being sent to His Majesty's Ambassador at Angora and to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran.

I have, &amp;c.

G. OGILVIE-FORBES.



[E 5933/1/93]

No. 61.

*Sir John Simon to M. Oliván, Committee for the Settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq.*

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 22, 1934.

IN your letter of the 11th June last you addressed to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, on behalf of the committee over which you preside, an appeal to reconsider the possibility of settling those Assyrians who may wish to leave Iraq in territory under the jurisdiction of His Majesty's Government, in view of the breakdown of the scheme proposed for their settlement in Brazil.

2. I have the honour to inform you in reply that His Majesty's Government have every desire to facilitate to the best of their ability the important task with which your committee is faced, and have accordingly renewed their efforts to find a suitable destination within the Colonial Empire for the Assyrians of Iraq. In view of the fact that it is a case of finding not merely land which can be made available, but land on which, from the point of view both of physical and economic conditions, the Assyrians can be expected to prosper, and into which they can be introduced without creating new and difficult problems of a political, social or economic order, this is no easy matter.

3. The results of the examination which has been undertaken into the possibilities of settlement in various territories in the Colonial Empire have hitherto, with one exception, been unfavourable. That exception concerns an area in the Rupununi district of British Guiana, where the prospects seem to be *prima facie* such as to justify His Majesty's Government in bringing them to the notice of your committee.

4. The area is an extensive one, and should be sufficiently large to accommodate all the Assyrians who may desire to leave Iraq. At present it is for the most part unsettled. A considerable number of horses and cattle are grazed upon it, and it appears to have possibilities of further development as a stock-raising area. Its agricultural potentialities have not yet been properly tested, but it is thought that limited areas would lend themselves to cultivation sufficiently to meet the requirements of the Assyrian settlers and their stock. Much closer examination will, however, be necessary, with particular regard to considerations of health and climate and to pastoral and agricultural conditions, before the district can definitely be pronounced as suitable for Assyrian settlement, and an independent and impartial investigation conducted on the spot with this object, under the auspices of the League of Nations, appears to His Majesty's Government to be essential, for the satisfaction both of the Council of the League and of the Assyrians themselves, before any decision is reached. The Government of British Guiana estimate that a mission of investigation would require to spend three months in the colony for the proper accomplishment of its task.

5. A memorandum is enclosed giving such details as are immediately available regarding the area in question. The memorandum also discusses possible lines of communication with the area, and gives a general idea of the probable cost of settlement so far as this can at present be estimated.

6. The land concerned is the property of the Government of British Guiana, but certain parts of it are at present leased to private interests. The largest of these interests is the Rupununi Development Company, which holds approximately 1,500 square miles of what is probably the best grazing land. The Government of British Guiana have accordingly taken the necessary steps to secure an option, under which, if the League of Nations decide to proceed with the scheme, the entire assets of the above company could be purchased for the sum of 168,000 dollars, at any time prior to the 20th March, 1935. The assets include, as the enclosed memorandum shows, not only land leases, but a quantity of cattle, horses and buildings, which should be a useful nucleus for any settlement operation.

7. There are in existence in the area certain well-defined Indian reservations which must be preserved and excluded from the land available for settlement. But these amount to only 855 square miles out of a total of some 13,000 square miles, and they are so situated as not to present, so far as can be foreseen, any

likelihood of disturbance of Indians by the settlement of Assyrians in the adjoining areas, or *vice versa*.

8. The suggestion that the Assyrians of Iraq might be settled in the Rupununi district has been laid by the Acting Governor of British Guiana, with the approval of his Executive Council, before the Legislative Council of the Colony, and the Legislative Council on the 21st September unanimously passed the following resolution:—

"This Council approves the proposal that His Majesty's Government should inform the League of Nations that there is land available in the Colony of British Guiana which appears *prima facie* to be suitable for settlement by the Assyrians, and is of the opinion that, as settlers, these people would be welcomed by the inhabitants of the colony; and agrees that the Government of British Guiana should co-operate in carrying such settlement into effect if it is decided to proceed with the project."

9. Until such time as the new community is successfully established as an integral part of the population of the colony and is in a position to make its due contribution to the general revenue, it will constitute a financial liability. I desire to make it clear that the Government of British Guiana are not in a position to accept any part of this liability. The possibilities of settlement in British Guiana are accordingly placed before your committee at this stage without prejudice to the question of the provision of the necessary finance, which can only be effectively considered when further investigation has proved the scheme to be a feasible one.

10. His Majesty's Government fully appreciate the importance of the Assyrian problem, to which reference was made in your letter of the 11th June, and they are impressed by the great urgency of finding a satisfactory solution for it. They trust, therefore, that your committee will lose no time in taking the necessary steps to institute the independent enquiry in British Guiana which is recommended in paragraph 4 above, and it is scarcely necessary for me to add that His Majesty's Government and the Government of British Guiana will gladly place all obtainable information before any mission which your committee may send out to the colony, and will extend to such a mission all possible facilities and assistance.

I have, &amp;c.

JOHN SIMON.

Enclosure in No. 61.

*Memorandum on the Possibilities of Assyrian Settlement in the Rupununi District of British Guiana.*

(A)—*General Description of Conditions in the Area from which Land for the Assyrians could be selected.*

*Situation.*—The region proposed, which is indicated on the attached sketch map, is bounded as follows:—

On the north by latitude 5° north; on the east by longitude 59° west to latitude 4° north, thence along that latitude to the Rupununi River, thence along the Rupununi, Rewa and Kwitaro Rivers and longitude 59° west to the intersection with latitude 2° north; and on the west by the Brazilian boundary.

*Area.*—The total area of the region is 13,110 square miles. From this must be deducted certain well-defined Indian reservations, amounting to 855 square miles, which must be preserved for the Indians and excluded from the settlement area. This leaves 12,255 square miles, of which 7,875 square miles are forest and 4,380 square miles open savannahs.



*Physical Features.*—There are two hilly portions, the Pakaraima and Kanuku Mountains, forest-covered, and rising to heights of 2,000–3,000 feet above sea level. The remainder of the area is open savannahs. These consist for the most part of undulating park land, sloping upwards to the mountains, and of a mean height of 300 feet above sea level. The lower areas flood to a depth of from 1 to 4 feet in the rainy season.

*Climate.*—The temperature ranges from a maximum of 91.9° F. (33.3° C.) to a minimum of 71.5° F. (21.9° C.). The nights throughout the year are uniformly cool.

*Rainfall and Water Supply.*—The rainfall ranges from 55 to 80 inches, two distinct seasons occurring, the wet, May–August, and the dry, September–April (see attached statement).

In the mountain regions rivers and streams give an ample supply of drinkable water all the year round.

In the open savannahs are rivers and creeks, which, when they dry up, leave ponds. There are indications that additional water can probably be obtained by boring shallow wells. Two ranchers have such wells, equipped with windmill pumps, which are understood never to have failed to give an adequate supply of water for domestic and irrigation purposes.

*Health.*—No detailed report on health conditions is at present available, but the climate in the area is reputed to be healthy.

*Existing Population.*—Apart from the Indians, for whom, as already indicated, well-defined reservations exist, the population consists of only a few settlers and ranchers. Grazing permits, some of which are annual, have been granted for 3,050 out of the 4,380 square miles of savannah.

*The Rupununi Development Company.*—The largest holding, which probably also comprises the best grazing land, is that of the Rupununi Development Company. It amounts to over 1,500 square miles, of which the company holds 300 square miles under grazing permits and the remainder on 99-year leases. The Government of British Guiana, considering it essential for the success of any scheme of Assyrian settlement, that this property should be available for inclusion in it, have taken the necessary steps to secure an option under which, if the League of Nations decide to proceed with the scheme, the entire assets of the company could be purchased for the sum of 168,000 dollars at any time prior to the 20th March, 1935. The assets include, in addition to the leases and grazing permits, 47,456 head of cattle, 1,282 horses, 32 miles of fencing, and buildings valued at 13,000 dollars. These assets would form a useful nucleus for the initial equipment of the settlers.

#### (B)—Pastoral and Agricultural Prospects.

*Stock Raising.*—The savannah area is essentially pastoral, and in addition to cattle and horses, sheep, goats, pigs and poultry are said to thrive. Cattle raising has, however, hitherto been left to private enterprise, and has often been carried out in a rather haphazard manner. The stock is of varying quality. It is reported to be reasonably good. There are, however, signs of phosphatic deficiencies, but any deterioration has probably been accentuated by inbreeding. This should be capable of remedy.

*Agriculture.*—Few scientific officers have visited the district, and reliable information as to its agricultural potentialities is scanty. It is, however, understood that the river valleys in the mountains are likely to prove the most suitable areas for agricultural settlement. In the savannahs little agricultural activity is at present carried on, except for the immediate needs of the few settlers who have established themselves.

The principal crops are cassava (which produces farinha, the staple food of the district) and maize. Other crops reported to have been grown are beans, tobacco, dry-land rice, bananas, plantains, pulses, sweet potatoes, lettuce, cabbage and, according to one report, "almost any kind of fruit or vegetable." In the soil of the hilly country citrus fruits (*e.g.*, oranges, limes, grape-fruit) are said to do well. Experiments have been made with wheat, but apparently without success.

Reports of persons who know the district well and who are considered by the Government of British Guiana to be competent to form an opinion are that the Assyrians should have no difficulty in growing sufficient food-stuffs for their own maintenance if settlement is carried out on the basis of small holdings, and that they could build up herds and flocks for sale.

The agricultural possibilities of the savannahs, however, have not yet been properly tested. A certain number of samples of soil have been analysed, and the varying results suggest that, without extensive fertilisation, successful cultivation may be limited to the river valleys (which are, however, numerous). It is considered that these should be satisfactory for the cultivation of the majority of tropical food-stuffs.

The whole situation clearly needs closer investigation, particularly from the point of view of (a) the production of cash crops and (b) the particular requirements and qualities of the Assyrians.

Should the scheme be proceeded with, it is considered desirable that the settlers should be assisted by the establishment in their area of a stock farm, under the care of an experienced veterinary officer, and an agricultural experimental station.

#### (C)—Communications.

The only regular means of communication with the area at present is the Cattle Trail, which leads from the savannah area south of the Kanuku Mountains to Wismar on the Demerara River. To the west of the Essequibo River there is a motor road which goes in the direction of the area proposed for settlement, but at present ends near the Konawaruk River. Communication by water is somewhat difficult, owing to the fact that the navigation of all the larger rivers is impeded by rapids and waterfalls.

The Government of British Guiana have suggested, however, that arrangements might be made for dealing with parties of 1,000–1,500 persons, arriving at intervals of three or four weeks, on one of the following alternative routes:—

*Route 1.*—By ocean-going steamer to Wismar on the Demerara River; by river to the Great Falls (fifteen hours) where a transfer from one system of river boats to another would be necessary; by river to Canister Falls (twelve hours); by lorry along the Cattle Trail to Kurupukari; thence by lorry to any point on the savannahs during the months of September to April.

This route would require the establishment of a base camp for 1,500 persons at Wismar, smaller rest camps at Great Falls and Canister Falls, and a distribution camp at Kurupukari.

*Route 2.*—Involves the extension of the Bartica–Potaro–Konawaruk road in one of the following directions: (a) to Mowasi Landing on the Essequibo River, or some more suitable point higher up the river, and thence to a point on the Cattle Trail north of Kurupukari (the Essequibo River to be crossed by punt); (b) southward to a point just north of the junction of the Siparuni and Burro-Burro Rivers, thence southward to a point on the Cattle Trail south of Kurupukari (the Siparuni River to be crossed by punt or bridge).

Each of these extensions would be approximately 50 miles in length, and present information suggests that extension (b) would be the better.

The stages of the route would be as follows: by ocean steamer to Bartica on the Essequibo River; thence by motor lorry to Kurupukari. A base camp for 1,500 persons would be required at Bartica, rest camps at Garraway Stream and at some point intermediate between Garraway Stream and Kurupukari, and a distribution camp at Kurupukari.

The camps on this route would cost approximately the same amount as is estimated if the Demerara route were used, but no river transport would have to be provided, and the conversion of the Cattle Trail between Canister Falls and Kurupukari into a motor road would be unnecessary. All the work done, and the money spent, on the opening up of this route would be of lasting benefit. A permanent and dependable route to and from the district would be set up, and it might be economically the better policy to establish it at the outset, even at the greater cost, in preference to spending money on the Demerara route, which would be of no permanent advantage.



## (D)—Cost of Settlement.

It would be out of place to attempt at this stage any close estimate of the cost of settlement, but the following factors in the probable expenditure involved may be mentioned. The cost of ocean transport would presumably not vary greatly from that contemplated in the Brazilian scheme (£120,000 for 10,000 persons). The cost of actual settlement in British Guiana will depend, in the first place, on the choice between the alternative routes described in the preceding section. The estimated cost of the establishment of camps on whichever route might be selected, and the provision at each camp of the necessary services and medical supplies is about 6,000 dollars (£1,250). In the event of Route 1 being chosen, the cost of providing the necessary river transport is estimated at not less than 7,000 dollars (say, £1,450), while the estimated cost of converting the Cattle Trail from Canister Falls to Kurupukari into a road suitable for motor vehicles is approximately 23,000 dollars (say, £4,800). If, on the other hand, Route 2 were chosen, the cost of the necessary road extension would, subject to close survey and on the basis of previous experience of road-making in the interior of the colony, probably be in the region of 150,000 dollars (£31,250).

The purchase of the assets of the Rupununi Development Company, if the option is exercised, will cost 168,000 dollars (£35,000). It is impossible to say at present what further outlay might be required for the provision of additional land, stock, buildings, seed and implements. Food will have to be provided during settlement, and, in the opinion of the Government of British Guiana, for the first two years after settlement, during which time the settlers should be becoming more and more self-supporting. An estimate, based on the cost, including transport, of the usual Government ration, is that the cost of food would be approximately £60 for a family of five persons for the first year, due allowance being made for the fact that some of the settlers, at all events, will possess cattle and will be able to catch fish, with which the rivers abound. The estimated cost of maintenance during the second year after settlement, when ground provisions, rice and other quick-growing food-stuffs become available in the district, is half that of the first year, i.e., about £30 a family.

In addition to the expense of establishing the proposed stock farm and agricultural experimental station, funds would presumably be necessary for the provision of medical facilities, schools, churches, &c.

It is suggested that the administration of the area and of the settlers should form an integral part of the district administration of the colony. The cost of the necessary extra personnel would be about £5,000 a year.

September 1934.

## Rainfall in the Rupununi District, 1928-34 (in inches).

Station.	Jan.	Feb.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total.
1928— Kurupukari ... Great Falls ... Annai Police Station	9.49 7.09 2.86	5.58 6.37 2.50	4.80 4.53 2.76	18.16 10.78 6.16	14.16 15.05 15.92	14.27 19.46 10.77	7.61 11.20 12.05	15.04 10.35 8.25	2.39 5.95 1.47	6.77 3.07 1.38	6.28 1.82 3.61	4.37 6.34 1.50	108.92 102.61 68.73
1929— Kurupukari ... Annai Police Station	1.63 0.91	3.87 0.75	4.07 0.70	13.40 3.55	No record 13.67	No record 6.88	No record 10.90	No record 3.67	2.38 3.95	4.55 0.93	5.79 2.41	6.71 2.76	57.08
1930— Kurupukari ... Annai Police Station	7.85 3.04	2.59 0.95	1.06 1.88	6.30 5.58	15.74 10.53	16.73 11.61	9.45 14.31	6.88 2.41	4.07 2.40	3.90 0.59	No record Nil	No record 1.88	74.57 54.68
1931— Kurupukari ... Annai Police Station Bon Success	2.25 1.51 No record	6.68 3.55 1.85	0.98 0.74 Nil	9.10 7.41 11.90	12.14 15.85 16.19	10.14 11.89 13.06	24.04 18.95 26.84	9.04 6.53 10.87	4.20 4.58 5.46	0.69 3.54 0.53	6.79 3.13 3.24	6.06 2.60 No record	98.04 90.28 83.94
1932— Kurupukari ... Annai Police Station Bon Success	3.11 3.95 0.49	3.54 2.02 0.65	8.69 4.90 5.40	13.36 11.87 8.25	18.74 14.15 9.48	9.94 7.71 4.70	14.51 7.09 11.49	13.56 5.53 7.03	2.99 1.35 Nil	2.50 Nil 0.20	1.83 Nil No record	7.61 0.35 Nil	100.28 57.73 47.69
1933— Kurupukari ... Annai Police Station Bon Success Isberton	6.62 2.86 0.82 1.21	4.03 2.83 1.05 0.62	3.68 1.96 0.52 4.82	3.65 2.34 No record 2.00	14.86 13.01 11.00 16.76	15.56 12.19 19.15 10.62	12.47 21.25 13.04 18.03	7.82 7.63 9.64 6.51	1.86 1.91 5.86 5.40	1.46 1.70 1.43 1.86	12.50 8.85 10.98 6.43	7.12 2.23 0.75 0.81	91.93 78.86 74.33 81.07
1934— Kurupukari ... Annai Police Station Bon Success	10.57 2.90 2.14	3.28 0.15 0.77	2.06 0.86 0.10	2.26 2.40 0.89	15.83 4.67 5.80	10.65 13.90 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	35.25 25.00 9.29

Note.—Kurupukari is in the intermediate forest belt, which has two rainy seasons and should not be included when calculating the average rainfall of the savannah country.



[E 5903/197/34]

No. 62.

*Sir John Simon to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes (Bagdad).*

(No. 662.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, September 25, 1934.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 540 of the 11th September regarding Perso-Iraqi relations, I have to inform you that Nuri Pasha-es-Said arrived in London on the 17th September and left again on the 20th September. I was myself absent at Balmoral during this time, but his Excellency had interviews with Sir Robert Vansittart and Mr. Rendel.

2. The object of Nuri Pasha's visit was, as had been anticipated, to repeat the request of the Iraqi Government for the advice of His Majesty's Government as to the desirability of appealing to the League of Nations against the refusal of Persia to recognise the validity of the frontier laid down by the International Commission in the years 1913-14. He said that he was strongly inclined to lodge forthwith an appeal with the Council of the League under paragraph 2 of article 11 of the Covenant. The specific grounds of complaint would be three in number and refer to the provocative activities of the Persian Government on the frontier: (a) the establishment of numerous police posts on Iraqi territory; (b) the disregard shown by Persian warships in the Shatt-el-Arab for the regulations of the Port of Basra Administration with consequent danger to other shipping and much prejudice to Iraq's interests; and (c) the vexatious cutting off of supplies of water on which villages, especially in the Khaniqin area, depended for their maintenance. So soon as the appeal had been lodged, and before it was heard (the first possible date was the January session of the Council), he would offer the Persian Government a settlement on the lines proposed and provisionally accepted by them in 1932, i.e., the Conservancy Board Convention, by which Persia would acquire a degree of control in the Shatt-el-Arab. In order to render such a settlement the more attractive he would throw in a scheme for pooling equally the royalties from the whole of the Naft Khaneh oil-field. This would be on the general lines of the settlement which had been contemplated and discussed at the time of King Feisal's visit to Tehran in 1932—a settlement which Nuri Pasha thought might have materialised had not the present Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Kazemi, exerted his personal influence against it with the Shah.

3. It was suggested to Nuri Pasha that though this plan had many advantages, it was also attended by some dangers. The legal position was, of course, unassailable, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, and there was much to be said for showing one's adversary from the first that one meant what one said, and was not afraid to submit one's case to an impartial tribunal. On the other hand an appeal to the Council of the League under article 11 would not necessarily lead to a judicial decision and might possibly lead to suggestions for a compromise detrimental to Iraq's interests. There was, moreover, the factor that the frontier line on the Shatt-el-Arab had not been delimited south of a point approximately opposite Fao, where the commission of 1913-14 had defined it as coming in from the open sea; south-east of this point it was difficult to say where the proper line of the frontier should run and it was quite possible that the Council, while they could hardly do less than confirm the validity of the 1913-14 frontier as a whole, might be pressed to interpret it in this area, and might interpret it in a manner which might leave a part or even the whole of the Rooka channel under Persian sovereignty. In addition Persia, as it was, owned half the river opposite Mohammerah.

4. Nuri Pasha was inclined to discount the dangers of a compromise on the ground that the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs, who had at one time entertained the idea of appealing to the League himself, had apparently failed to secure any support for the Persian case. He had, in particular, Nuri believed, sounded the Soviet and Polish Governments while on his way to the recent meeting at Geneva, but the replies had apparently not been encouraging. With regard to the danger of the Rooka Channel being allotted to Persia, Nuri said that he had always contemplated the eventual conclusion of a conservancy convention, which would cover all points such as this.

5. The alternative course of postponing an appeal to the League until Nuri Pasha had accepted the Persian Government's invitation to go to Tehran was

also considered. Nuri was, however, reluctant to adopt this course, as he feared that the only result might be to make the Shah entrench himself more firmly on the frontier question and take up a position from which it would be difficult for him to retreat with dignity, even after a League pronouncement. Moreover, he feared that if he made his offer of the convention and of the oil royalty pooling scheme before appealing to the League, and the Persian Government rejected it, he would be without any material for a compromise once the appeal had been made.

6. In a final interview, Sir Robert Vansittart told Nuri Pasha that he thoroughly agreed with his reasons for not going to Tehran, especially as it was really for the Persians, who were the suppliants in this case, to go to Bagdad. But he suggested that the best course might be for the Iraqi Government, without actually going to the League, to show the strength of their hand by making it plain that they were if necessary prepared to do so. Having thus called the Persian bluff they would, as an act of grace, offer the Conservancy Board and the royalty pooling arrangement. Then, if the Persians were still recalcitrant, they would reconsider the possibility of appealing to the League.

7. Nuri Pasha, who promised to think carefully over this advice, undertook to inform His Majesty's Government as soon as the Iraqi Government had reached a decision.

8. During his visit Nuri Pasha asked whether His Majesty's Government attached importance to his waiting to see the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs, who was expected in London on about the 24th September. Nuri had already made his plans to leave, but would cancel them if His Majesty's Government thought it necessary. He was informed that there seemed to be no need for him to do this.

I am, &amp;c.

JOHN SIMON.

[E 6094/845/93]

No. 63.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received October 1.)*

(No. 553.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, September 19, 1934.*

WITH reference to Sir Francis Humphrys's despatch No. 149 of the 15th March last, I regret to report that I have been once more obliged to make representations to the Iraqi Government on account of an objectionable article published in the *Ahali* newspaper on the 6th September, which, in addition to offensive criticism of British policy in "colonial countries," contained definite accusations of bribery and corruption against British administrative officials in the Amarah liwa. I addressed my protest personally to the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, and I received from his Excellency on the following day an expression of his regret at these scurrilous allegations and an intimation that the authorities had the matter in hand.

2. I have now learned that the *Ahali* has been suspended from publication for one year on the ground of "continuous publication of matter of a nature calculated to endanger the safety of the State." In accordance with the terms of article 6 of the new Amending Press Law No. 33 of 1934 (a translation of which, together with a commentary, was enclosed in Sir Francis Humphrys's despatch No. 258 of the 9th May last), the suspension took place by order of the Council of Ministers.

3. Apart from my representations to the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, the severe treatment of the *Ahali* is undoubtedly connected with the energetic police measures which are being taken to discover the authors and distributors of the anonymous letter denouncing King Ghazi which appeared at the time of the celebration of the anniversary of His Majesty's accession, and was referred to in the last paragraph of my despatch No. 538 of the 11th September. I understand that the Iraqi authorities take a serious view of this incident, the more so as extravagant rumours are about to the effect that the original intention of the conspirators was to supplement the letter by manifestos inciting the populace to rise against the Government, and they have arrested numerous persons



on suspicion of their complicity. In most cases those arrested are members of the idle effendi class who haunt the Bagdadi coffee-shops, but among them is the responsible editor of the *Ahali*, Abdul Qadir Ismail, a brother of Khalil Ismail, who occupies the important position of Secretary to the Council of Ministers, and Kamil-al-Chadirji, a supporter of the same paper, who is a brother-in-law of the present Mayor of Bagdad. Kamil has been released on bail, but the editor is still in the hands of the police. This affair is now assuming a certain resemblance to the notorious case of the anonymous letters circulated against King Feisal in 1931.

4. The Iraqi authorities have also taken advantage of a further provision of article 6 of the recent amendment to the Press Law to withdraw the licence granted to two allegedly "literary" publications, the *Attarid* and the *Ittihad*, on the ground that they exceeded their authority in embarking on political topics. They appear to have offended by criticising the action of the Government in arresting the editor of the *Ahali* and by indulging in the sort of vague, half-Communist, abuse of the Iraqi propertied classes, which is becoming common among the young effendi class.

I have, &c.  
G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

[E 5987/1/93]

No. 64.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received September 25.)*

(No. 554.)

HIS Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Bagdad presents his compliments to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit to him copy of a note from Sir K. Cornwallis enclosing a note from Major Thomson to the Acting Minister of the Interior, Bagdad, respecting the transfer of Assyrians to Syria.

*Bagdad, September 19, 1934.*

Enclosure 1 in No. 64.

*Sir K. Cornwallis to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes.*

Dear Ogilvie-Forbes,

*Bagdad, September 19, 1934.*

I FORWARD herewith copy of a letter No. 888 of the 16th instant from Thomson regarding Assyrians.

Yours sincerely,  
K. CORNWALLIS.

Enclosure 2 in No. 64.

*Copy of Confidential Letter No. 888 of September 16, 1934, from Major D. B. Thomson, President of the Relief Committee, to His Excellency Ali Jawdat Beg, Acting Minister of Interior, Bagdad.*

I BEG to report that the transfer to Syria of the Assyrian dependants in Iraq of those Assyrians who left Iraq last July has been completed.

In all, 1,416 persons have been handed over to the French authorities.

The transfer from Mosul to Hassiche was completed without any incident and according to programme.

The French authorities were most helpful and ready to agree to all my proposals, even to the receiving of sixteen persons in all in excess of the 1,400 which was accepted in the original agreement.

Eight of these people are not shown on the lists as the French authorities agreed to their acceptance unlisted.

The following are the dates and details of the convoys:—

September	1, 1934	....	....	....	215
"	3, "	....	....	....	204
"	5, "	....	....	....	213
"	7, "	....	....	....	216
"	10, "	....	....	....	237
"	12, "	....	....	....	194
"	15, "	....	....	....	129
					8 (unlisted)
					1,416

[E 6097/1752/93]

No. 65.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received October 1.)*

(No. 558.)

*Bagdad, September 20, 1934.*

Sir,

IN his despatch No. 257 of the 9th May, His Majesty's Ambassador transmitted copy of the drilling return of the British Oil Development Company for the month of April. Owing to the absence on leave of the company's local manager and the unwillingness of his substitute to supply this information without specific authority, I have been unable to obtain copies of similar monthly returns since that date, but I have now received from the acting British consul at Mosul a report on the present stage of the company's undertaking.

2. At Qaiyarah, the headquarters of the oil-fields, there are three wells. No. 1 was drilled by the Germans during the war, and is still exploited to produce bitumen for sale to the Public Works Departments, who are now erecting a small refinery close to the British Oil Development Company's camp for refining the bitumen. No. 2 was drilled about 1928 by the Iraq Petroleum Company in the course of their prospecting, and has been filled up, and would need redrilling to exploit. No. 3 was drilled by the British Oil Development Company, and is mudded down.

3. Other wells are being or have been drilled at various points lying west of the Tigris, within a radius of some 35 miles of Qaiyarah. Of the three wells at Najmah, No. 1 is complete and mudded down; No. 2 is being drilled by percussion, and is all but complete and ready to "come in" any day; No. 3 is being drilled by American rotary drill (Sullivan type), and has reached a depth of 800 feet, or approximately two-thirds of the depth anticipated to be required.

4. At Jawan are one well and two projected wells. No. 1 is being drilled by percussion, and is half drilled. Of the remaining two, one is being prepared for the erection of a large German rotary drill, and has got as far as concrete platforms and about one storey of the derrick; while the other is being prepared for percussion drill, and has got as far as concrete platforms.

5. At Habbarah, an emplacement is being prepared for a large German rotary drill similar to that at Jawan, and has reached about the same stage.

6. At Sadid, another emplacement for a German rotary drill is being put up.

7. A well was completed last winter at Mishrak, but though the geological indications were all correct, the oil had disappeared, probably through centuries of seepage, and the well is being demolished.

8. The German drilling machinery is from Hanell and Lue, Dusseldorf, and the firm, being under guarantee, is sending out selected German drillers to work it. Two or three have arrived, and the remainder, to the number of thirteen, are expected soon.

9. The company have not shown much activity in the direction of building or road-making. This is but prudent at this early stage of their operations. No information is available at present as to the prospects of marketable oil being

*Ogilvie-Forbes*



found in commercial quantities, but I hope to be able to report on this point shortly.

10. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the Department of Overseas trade.

I have, &c.

G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

[E 6104/1/93]

No. 66.

(Official No.: C. 427. 1934. VII.)

LEAGUE OF NATIONS: SETTLEMENT OF THE ASSYRIANS OF IRAQ.

*Report by the Committee to the Council.*—(Received in Foreign Office, October 1.)

ON the 5th June last, the Council Committee for the Settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq was obliged to report to the Council the breakdown of the plan for settlement in Brazil which it had been pursuing up to that time. The Council, after considering, on the 7th June, the situation resulting from this development, instructed the committee to persist in its efforts to find a destination for the Assyrians, and urged the Governments to whom the committee might address representations to give favourable consideration to such representations and to facilitate the solution of the problem in view of its great importance.

In pursuance of this decision, the Council Committee at once despatched urgent appeals to the Governments of the following countries in respect of either their home or their overseas territories:—

Union of South Africa.	Canada.	Netherlands.
Argentina.	Colombia.	Portugal.
Australia.	France.	Spain.
Belgium.	Greece.	Turkey.
United Kingdom.	Italy.	

The replies of the Governments of South Africa, Argentina, Canada, Colombia and Turkey are still awaited and the attitude of these Governments is at present unknown. Some of the other Governments concerned have felt obliged to return unfavourable replies to the appeals, though in one case further correspondence is proceeding. Meanwhile, however, the committee is glad to be able to submit to the Council the attached notes from the Governments of the United Kingdom and France, drawing attention to the possibilities of settlement in British Guiana and French West Africa respectively.

Such information as is immediately available regarding the extensive area concerned in British Guiana is contained in a memorandum<sup>(1)</sup> attached to the note from the United Kingdom Government. In that note, however, the United Kingdom Government indicates that, while the area appears to have possibilities of further development as a stock-raising area, its agricultural potentialities have not yet been properly tested, and that much further examination will be necessary, with particular regard to considerations of health and climate and to pastoral and agricultural conditions, before the district can definitely be pronounced as suitable for Assyrian settlement. The Government of the United Kingdom accordingly considers that, before any decision is reached, an independent and impartial investigation should be conducted on the spot under the auspices of the League of Nations, and it suggests that such an investigation should be instituted with all possible speed.

The committee agrees as to the desirability of sending at the earliest possible moment a mission of experts specially qualified to form an opinion on the question at issue, and it proposes to act accordingly as soon as the selection of the necessary personnel, which is now under active consideration, has been completed.

The French Government also, in its note of the 24th September, urges the desirability of sending a mission of investigation to the area concerned in French

<sup>(1)</sup> No. 61.

West Africa, as a preliminary even to the limited settlement on an experimental basis, which the note contemplates in the first place. It is, of course, open to doubt whether settlement on an experimental basis would, in any case, offer an acceptable solution of the urgent problem with which the committee is faced. Before considering the question further, the committee has asked the French Government for certain supplementary information. Should it decide, however, in the light of this information when received, to proceed further with the scheme at this stage, it is clear that the first step must be an investigation on the spot into the suitability of the area concerned, and the committee would propose to send a mission of experts for this purpose. During the discussions which have already taken place on this point in the committee, the hope has been expressed that, if the report of any mission which may be sent is favourable, it may be sufficiently so to enable the French Government to reconsider its view regarding the necessity for a preliminary experimental settlement on a limited scale.

The Council will certainly appreciate that, in deciding to send out missions of investigation which will necessarily require a certain time in which to accomplish their task, the committee has not lost sight of the urgency of reaching a solution of the Assyrian problem. It feels, however, that considerations of urgency should not be allowed to obscure the necessity of obtaining, in the interests of the Assyrians themselves, the most complete guarantees as regards the suitability of a particular plan before it is put into execution.

The committee proposes to the Council that, in conformity with article 33 (2) of the Financial Regulations, the cost of the investigation in British Guiana and of any similar investigations which may be necessary elsewhere should be met in the first place, as in the case of the Brazilian scheme, from the "Working Capital Fund." It requests the Council to authorise the allocation for this purpose from the above fund of a sum not exceeding 50,000 Swiss francs, subject to reimbursement from the funds ultimately available for financing the Assyrian resettlement operation as a whole.

There is another matter on which the committee is happy to be able to report that progress has been made since the Council last considered the Assyrian problem. After the troubles of August 1933, some 550 Assyrian men remained in Syria, where they have been maintained by the French Government. Their families remained separated from them in Iraq. For some time, negotiations have been in progress between the French and Iraqi Governments regarding the transfer of the families to Syria, and these negotiations have now been brought to a successful conclusion. Under the agreement reached, some 1,400 persons have been transferred from Iraq to Syria and are being installed, with the original internees, in the valley of the western Khabur River, pending a final decision on the general question of Assyrian resettlement. The committee records with satisfaction the successful outcome of the negotiations.

There is, however, one point in this connexion which will require further consideration. A note from the French Government informing the committee of the arrangements made is attached to the present report. It will be observed that the French authorities in the mandated territory have thought it desirable not to maintain the Assyrians in question in a refugee camp, but to settle them on the land in villages to be constructed specially for the purpose, so that they may become gradually self-supporting during the period which may yet elapse before a general settlement scheme for the Assyrians has been put into effect. This operation, however, according to the French Government, which bases its opinion on estimates prepared by the representative in Beirut of the Nansen Office, will cost considerably more than the sum of 10,000 dinars paid under the agreement by the Iraqi Government, this sum being calculated on the basis of the probable cost of maintenance in a refugee camp over a fixed period. The French Government wishes to reserve the right to raise at a later stage the question of the incidence of the extra expenditure involved, which it considers it impossible to charge to the Syrian budget. The committee has not been able, in the short time since the note was received, to examine this question thoroughly, and it proposes to consider it further at one of its future meetings.

The committee has continued to receive monthly reports from the Iraqi Government concerning the situation of the Assyrians in Iraq. The Iraqi Government has also elucidated various points in this connexion, on which the committee, as it stated in its report of the 5th June last, had felt bound to ask for further details and observations.



With one exception, these various communications call for no special observations on the part of the committee. That exception concerns a reference in a note dated the 31st August from the Iraqi delegation, informing the committee of the conclusion of the above-mentioned agreement relative to the transfer of the Assyrian families to Syria. That note observed that the agreement would result in a reduction in the number of refugees at the Mosul camp. It added that, in view of the fact that no territory had yet been found for the settlement of the Assyrians and of the difficulty which the Iraqi Government experienced in continuing to bear the heavy cost of maintaining the Mosul camp indefinitely, the Iraqi Cabinet had decided to form a Ministerial Committee for the purpose of submitting a report proposing a more practical arrangement.

In recent oral discussions with the Iraqi delegate, the committee, while recognising that it was for the Iraqi Government to decide on the particular manner in which effect should be given to its assurances regarding the welfare and security of the Assyrians pending emigration from Iraq, felt bound to express certain considerations which it hoped that the Iraqi Government would take into account before coming to a decision on the question of the closure of the Mosul camp. The Iraqi delegate on his side explained the reasons which had prompted his Government to review this question. He was not in a position to say what attitude his Government would now adopt, in view of the fresh possibilities which had just been brought to light of finding a place of settlement outside Iraq. He promised, however, to enquire and inform the committee of the result as soon as possible. He also undertook to communicate to his Government the considerations which the committee had put forward, and he added that the committee could, he felt, rest assured that, if it were decided to close the Mosul camp, the alternative arrangements would be equally efficacious and advantageous to the Assyrians, for whose welfare the Iraqi Government desired to do its best.

*Geneva, September 26, 1934.*

#### Appendix I.

[No. 61.]

#### Appendix II.

*Letter from the French Government.*

(Translation.)

*Geneva, September 24, 1934.*

IN a letter dated the 11th June last, you were good enough to ask the French Government to give its favourable consideration to the possibility of receiving the Assyrians of Iraq in the oversea territories under its rule.

In reply to that communication, I have the honour to inform you that the Government of the Republic has given its closest attention to the question of the possible settlement of the Assyrians in those oversea territories.

From the investigations that have been made, it appears that the settlement of some Assyrian families might be contemplated in the bend of the Niger. The problem of an Assyrian immigration into the Sudan, however, calls for very careful consideration, because regard must be paid to the question of their acclimatisation and adaptation to the severe conditions of labour which agriculture in the tropics involves for all colonists of the white race. For instance, to what extent will the Assyrians, however accustomed they may be to rural life, react against malaria? Moreover, experience would seem to show that an individual cannot resist transplantation from his original environment unless he can find in the place to which he emigrates a diet substantially the same as that to which he has been accustomed from childhood. On this point no definite information is yet available.

That being so, should the experiment seem worth trying on various grounds, the wisest policy in this particular case would appear to be to send a mission to the Sudan to enquire into the conditions of life, housing and climate, and the

possibilities of a first Assyrian immigration on the small scale of a few families. With the agreement of the local authorities and the mission of enquiry, those families would be sent to such regions as might seem most suitable for the acclimatisation of persons of white race.

It would be only after this initial experiment, on which the Governor-General of French West Africa would keep a very careful eye, and on the explicit condition that its results were conclusive, that the despatch of a further, larger batch of emigrants could be contemplated.

In the French Government's opinion, the method set out above is the only one which would give the scheme for Assyrian immigration into the Sudan a chance of success.

To come to another point, the Government of the Republic feels that the various expenses involved by an Assyrian immigration into the Sudan could not be charged to the budget of French West Africa. The committee for the Assyrians of Iraq would therefore have to consider how to defray, not merely the expense of despatching the mission of enquiry, but also that of transporting the emigrants to Africa, and any repatriation expenses that might become necessary. Furthermore, it is essential to arrange that on their departure from Iraq the emigrants should be given money for the journey and sufficient funds to meet their installation expenses and to provide for their needs until the harvest. Funds would also be required for the very close medical supervision of the new immigrants.

Such is the preliminary information which I have thought it desirable to give you, in order to enable your committee to decide whether the idea of settling the Assyrians of Iraq in the Sudan is to be proceeded with. If so, a more detailed examination of the question would then become necessary.

For the Minister for Foreign Affairs and by authority:

R. MASSIGLI,

*Minister Plenipotentiary,  
Head of the French League of Nations  
Department.*

#### Appendix III.

*Letter from the French Government to the Chairman of the Committee for the Settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq.*

(Translation.)

Mr. Chairman,

*Geneva, September 26, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the negotiations undertaken between the High Commissariat of the French Republic in the Levant and the Iraqi Government for the transfer from Iraq to Syria of the families of the 550 Assyro-Chaldeans who, since July 1933, have been refugees in territory under French mandate, were successfully concluded last month.

As a consequence of this agreement, 1,400 or 1,500 persons arrived in the Assetch District in the first fortnight of September. The 2,000 old and new refugees will be divided between four villages, the construction of which was immediately begun and around which they will have cultivable land whence they will be able to derive a livelihood. Their installation is being carried out under the direction of M. Burnier, Director of the Nansen Office, whose competence and devotion the High Commissariat has been happy to utilise once again.

The Iraqi Government has been good enough to contribute a lump sum of £10,000 sterling to the expenses of this organisation. But the estimated total expenditure will exceed 3 million francs. So heavy a burden exceeds the financial capacity of the States under French mandate. I venture to hope that the committee will assist them to find the resources which will enable them to bring their humanitarian work to a successful conclusion.

RENE MASSIGLI.



[E 6106/1/93]

No. 67.

*United Kingdom Delegate to Foreign Office.—(Received October 1.)*  
(No. 157.)

THE United Kingdom Delegate to the League of Nations presents his compliments, and has the honour to transmit copies of a record of the 33rd meeting of the Council Committee, on the 24th September, respecting the Assyrian question.

*United Kingdom Delegation,  
Geneva, September 28, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 67.

ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

*Record of Thirty-third Meeting of the Council Committee, held on  
September 24, 1934, at 4 P.M.*

THE President reported that unfavourable replies to the committee's appeal of the 11th June last had been received from Belgium, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain; that certain replies were still outstanding; and that affirmative replies had been received from the United Kingdom Government and from the French Government.

Before proceeding to consider these two replies, there was one point of procedure which the President wished to clear up. He expected to be away from his post between the 8th October and the 9th November. During that period the committee might be obliged to meet, and he would like to arrange for the appointment of a vice-president. The Spanish consul would attend the committee on his behalf, but it was clearly desirable that the presidency of the committee should be in the hands of one of the members who had attended its meetings throughout and was familiar with the work. He therefore proposed that the Danish representative should be appointed vice-president. This was unanimously agreed to.

The President then went on to discuss the communication from the United Kingdom Government. He recalled that that communication emphasised the urgency of the solution. The problem in Iraq brooked of no delay. The season for immigration in British Guiana ended in April next, and much remained to be done even after the mission of investigation had completed its work. Even this, according to the United Kingdom Government's communication, would require three months. The President was personally in favour of despatching a mission of investigation, as proposed by the United Kingdom Government. He thought this mission should be generally on the lines of the one sent to Brazil, and he thought it would be particularly useful if Brigadier Browne—in view of his Assyrian experience and the further experience which he had gained in Brazil—could form part of the mission. The committee might wish the United Kingdom representative to ascertain whether Brigadier Browne was willing to serve.

The Mexican Representative observed that paragraph 4 of the United Kingdom note provided a strong argument in favour of a mission of investigation.

The Danish Representative suggested that an agricultural expert should go out with Brigadier Browne. He wished to emphasise the necessity for speed. Apart from other considerations, the option for the purchase of the assets of the Rupununi Company would end on the 20th March. He suggested, therefore, that the possibility should be considered, with a view to avoiding not only expense but also waste of time, of asking the Administration of one of the neighbouring countries, e.g., French or Dutch Guiana or Venezuela, to nominate such an agricultural expert. This would ensure that someone familiar with the type of country under consideration would be chosen.

The President said that the choice of the personnel of the mission obviously presented many difficulties, and he suggested that it might be best to leave it to himself and to the secretariat to submit a list of suitable candidates.

The United Kingdom Representative supported this proposal, and expressed the view that it would be advisable to see whether any agricultural expert of international repute were immediately available in Europe, so that he could have the advantage of consultation with the committee before proceeding on the mission. The possibility of such consultation might outweigh the disadvantage on the grounds of expense.

The Danish Representative asked, as regards expense, whether the committee could proceed without the consent of the Assembly, seeing that the Assembly was still sitting.

M. Arocha said that, as regards the expense of a mission, only the consent of the Council would be required.

The President said that if the committee decided to send out a mission or more than one mission, the committee could submit a resolution to the Council asking for authority to cover the necessary expense.

The Mexican Representative said that the United Kingdom communication suggested to him that the addition of a medical expert to the mission might be advisable.

The President deprecated this on the grounds of expense. He recalled that no medical expert had been included in the mission to Brazil, where considerations of health had been equally important. A questionnaire had been drawn up for the guidance of the mission, and this procedure could again be adopted. In the case of Brazil, the mission had been able to form an opinion regarding health conditions. He felt sure, moreover, that the British medical service in British Guiana would give every assistance, and would provide material on which the members of the mission—though not medical experts themselves—could form a reliable opinion. The mission must rely to a large extent on information provided by the local administration, and its main object, after all, was to see whether general conditions were such as to be likely to suit the Assyrians.

The French Representative raised the question whether the Nansen Office should be represented on the mission.

The President said that this suggestion certainly deserved consideration. It might be that it would be sufficient to have a Nansen Office representative on the mission instead of an agricultural expert. He himself, however, was a little doubtful about this. Incidentally, he recalled a statement at an earlier meeting by the president of the Nansen Office which seemed to indicate that the Nansen Office were not prepared to accept further responsibility for settlement in an area so remote as South America. He doubted, therefore, whether the Nansen Office would be willing to associate itself with the British Guiana scheme.

The Italian Representative expressed the view that an agricultural expert was most needed on the mission, and he doubted whether the Nansen Office had any representative who could be called an agricultural expert.

The United Kingdom Representative pointed out that, in any case, the question could not be decided precisely on the analogy of the procedure adopted in the case of Brazil. He recalled that the Brazilian plan had been suggested in the first place by the Nansen Office, and that it was at the request of the Nansen Office itself that one of its representatives accompanied the mission, and he had accompanied it at the expense of the Nansen Office and not of the League.

The President said he thought this an important consideration. In the present case the offer was made, not by a private company, but by a Government. Moreover, the only representative available was probably Major Johnson, and while he did not suggest that two British subjects would not produce a perfectly impartial report on a British colony, he thought it would be preferable from many points of view if the mission did not consist of two British subjects. He thought that Brigadier Browne must obviously be part of the mission, but not Major Johnson.



The President noted that the committee was in principle agreed on the despatch of a mission to British Guiana, and asked the United Kingdom representative to ascertain whether Brigadier Browne would be prepared to join the mission. At the next meeting of the committee the secretariat would present the names of likely candidates for attachment to the mission in the capacity of agricultural expert.

The President then proposed the examination of the French Government's note. In many respects the problem which that note presented was similar to the British Guiana scheme. Certain details, however, were different or less sharply defined, and he himself found it difficult at the moment to pronounce on the question as to whether a mission of investigation should be sent out at the present stage, as suggested by the French Government. He would, in the first place, like further information, and he suggested that the French Government might furnish it under the headings contained in the *questionnaire* by which the mission to Brazil had been guided.

In reply to a question from the President, the *French Representative* said that a great deal of detailed information was available at the Quai d'Orsay, and he would do his best to obtain it by telephone.

The President said that, in view of the urgency of the problem, there was a good deal to be said for sending two missions simultaneously, one to British Guiana and one to French West Africa. He proposed, however, that the committee, before taking any decision, should await further details of the French scheme. The question of personnel might also present difficulties.

The *Italian Representative* observed that a careful investigation seemed all the more necessary as the French Government were apparently only prepared at present to contemplate an experimental settlement of a few families.

The President said that he was not unduly perturbed by this suggestion. The French representative had helped to overcome a similar condition laid down by the Brazilian Government, and he felt that he would be all the more able to overcome the scruples of his own Government. He agreed, however, with the view of the Italian representative.

The *Danish Representative* found the French proposal for an experimental settlement the most difficult part of the scheme. The French note spoke of the difficulties of acclimatisation, and expressed some doubt as to whether transplantation of the Assyrians would be successful. It seemed to him that many years might be needed for an experimental period. It was possible that the emigrants might thrive in the first two years or so, and that their energies might flag afterwards. Perhaps it might be possible to find volunteers among the Assyrians who would go to French West Africa at once as an experiment, without any preliminary investigation.

Doubt was expressed by various representatives as to whether the committee could take the responsibility without much more careful examination of sending out volunteers, even if they were forthcoming.

The President expressed the view that as a first step a mission of investigation was an absolute necessity. In the absence of such a mission the responsibility of the committee would be too great. But he repeated that before deciding on the despatch of a mission, further details were desirable regarding: (1) the chance of adaptation by the Assyrians; and (2) the economic basis of the French plan.

The *French Representative* said that he would certainly obtain further details, but he did not think that this would meet M. Borberg's point about experimental settlement.

M. Oliran said that he himself did not like the idea of an experiment. If the experiment turned out badly, and the first batch of settlers either died off or had to be transferred elsewhere, the committee would bear a heavy responsibility.

The *United Kingdom Representative* said that he thought a mission of investigation absolutely essential as a first step before any settlement took place, even on an experimental basis. He hoped, however, that if the report of the mission were satisfactory, this would lead the French Government to reconsider

their attitude regarding experimental settlement. It seemed to him that the object of the mission must be to establish definitely one way or the other whether the Assyrians could be expected to thrive in the area in question. M. Borberg had already pointed out the time difficulty as regards any experiment, and it would be recalled that the same point had arisen in connexion with the Brazilian scheme. The Assyrian problem in Iraq was acute and called for the early removal from Iraq of all the Assyrians who wished to go. The committee had been obliged to indicate to the Brazilian Government that the experimental settlement of a few families would offer no solution to the problem with which the committee was faced. Quite apart from the time factor, an experiment raised the question of repatriation, and from the political point of view it was fairly clear that there could be no question of repatriating to Iraq any of the Assyrians who elected to leave the country.

The *Danish Representative* expressed doubt whether a mission of investigation would serve any useful purpose. The French Government themselves, who might be expected to know the country well, clearly did not know whether it would be suitable and, in fact, feared ill results.

The President said that in the light of the further information which the French delegation would furnish, the committee would have to consider whether a theoretical test, i.e., the despatch of a mission of investigation, could replace a practical test, i.e., experimental settlement.

The *French Representative* said that the reason why the French could not express a definite opinion was that this was an entirely new problem. White labour had never been introduced into the area concerned, and the French Government did not know how it would work. The area had been irrigated, with the result that cotton was being more and more cultivated, but the cultivation hitherto had been by native labour.

#### *Petitions from the Mar Shimun.*

The President observed that the Mar Shimun had addressed a number of petitions to the committee since its last session. His own opinion was that these were not worth close examination. The observations which the Iraqi delegation had furnished on previous petitions had shown the Mar Shimun's previous complaints to be without substantial foundation.

M. Arocha said that the Iraqi delegation had indicated to him that the Iraqi Government would prefer that further petitions from the Mar Shimun should be ignored. M. Arocha had simply replied that this was a matter for the committee to decide.

The *United Kingdom Representative* said that he did not think that the Iraqi Government were justified in complaining if these petitions were referred to them for observations, and it seemed to him that it was useful that they should be so referred. Many of the Mar Shimun's complaints had been shown conclusively to be baseless, but it was impossible to say for certain that there was no truth in any complaint which he might make, and by ignoring his complaints the committee might be assuming an undesirable responsibility. In any case he thought that the communication of the petitions served a useful purpose in showing the Iraqi Government that the committee took an interest in the situation of the Assyrians so long as they remained in Iraq, and perhaps made the Iraqi Government pay more careful attention than they might otherwise do to this aspect of the question. There was one point, however, which the United Kingdom representative wished to raise in connexion with the Mar Shimun's petitions. This related to the attacks, which recent petitions had contained, upon Major Thomson. These attacks were particularly stupid and unfair. The Assyrians had, in fact, a great deal to thank Major Thomson for, and, in trying to carry out an unwelcome settlement scheme in 1933, and more recently, in advising the Assyrians to return to their villages and cultivate, Major Thomson had merely been attempting to put into effect, in the first place, a resolution of the League Council, and, in the second place, a message drawn up by the Assyrian Committee of the Council. This was perfectly well known, but the Mar Shimun chose to ignore the facts.



It was agreed that there should be no change in the procedure, whereby the Mar Shimmun's petitions were circulated to members of the committee and sent to the Iraqi delegation for observations.

#### *Reports of the Iraqi Government.*

*The President* stated that regular reports on the situation of the Assyrians had been received up to and including the month of August. Moreover, the special points on which the Iraqi delegation had been asked for further information (see C. Min. Ass. 43), had been answered by the Iraqi delegation in a manner which M. Oliván considered generally satisfactory.

#### *Internees in Syria.*

*The President* expressed the thanks of the committee to the French Government for their efforts in carrying out with the Iraqi Government arrangements for transferring to Syria the families of those Assyrians who were interned in French mandated territory in August 1933. He asked the French representative whether he had any observations to make on this subject.

*The French Representative* said that the French High Commissioner in Syria had reported that the movement of the families of the internees into Syria had been completed on the 10th September. This was the result of fairly long negotiations, the chief difficulty in which had been the question of finance. The Iraqi Government had at first only been prepared to pay a sum of £2,000-£3,000, but had eventually agreed to pay £10,000. The actual cost of settlement, however, far exceeded this sum. The French Government had thought it best, in view of the uncertainty which existed as regards the time which the families would spend in Syria, to settle them on the land in villages where they could become self-supporting, rather than to keep them in camps as had been done in Iraq. A scheme of settlement had therefore been worked out by M. Burnier—the local Nansen Office representative—which it was estimated would cost 3,400,000 fr. It was clear that the difference between this sum and the payment made by the Iraqi Government could not be borne by the Syrian budget, since Syria was not directly concerned with the Assyrian question, and he thought that there would be criticism, not only locally, but from the Mandates Commission, if any attempt were made to place the burden upon Syria. In the circumstances, he thought that it would be best to insert in the committee's report to the Council a formula to the effect that the difference between the sum paid by Iraq and the estimated cost of settlement should be eventually refunded to the Syrian budget by the League of Nations from the final Assyrian settlement funds. The French representative added that the French Government reserved the right to claim priority for the inclusion of the internees in Syria in any final Assyrian settlement scheme.

*The United Kingdom Representative* asked for information regarding the sum mentioned by the French representative, namely, 3,400,000 fr. Did this represent the cost of the temporary settlement of the internees, or was it based on the hypothesis that they might remain indefinitely in Syria. Was it, in fact, an estimate for their permanent settlement there? The United Kingdom representative understood that the negotiations with Iraq had been for a purely temporary settlement, and that the sum paid by the Iraqi Government, namely, 10,000 dinars, was intended to represent the cost of maintaining the Assyrians for a certain period, namely, six months or a year, on the basis of the actual cost of their maintenance in Iraq.

*The French Representative* regretted that he did not know what the estimate of 3,400,000 fr. represented. The French High Commissioner had simply reported that settlement would cost that amount, and he did not know how it was made up, or on what basis it had been calculated.

*The President* said that he understood the French proposal to be that one section of the committee's report to the Council should be concerned with the transfer of the internees, and should point out that the difference between M. Burnier's estimate and the sum paid by the Iraqi Government would have to be charged to the eventual settlement fund. If, however, for some reason a settlement scheme outside Iraq for all the Assyrians could not be worked out, was it the intention of the French Government that the League of Nations should be responsible for the sum in question?

*The French Representative* explained that the responsibility might not necessarily lie with the League of Nations. The point was that the Syrian budget was at present being charged with expenses which did not really concern it, and the French Government were anxious that the money should eventually be refunded from other sources.

*The Danish Representative* observed that this was the first time the matter had been mentioned officially. He asked whether the committee or the Council could take the responsibility of accepting the charge named, and whether even the Assembly at this late date could do so.

*The President* said that in loyalty to the French representative he must state that the French delegate had consulted him a little time ago as to whether to raise this point in the appropriate commission of the Assembly. The President had recommended him not to do so. He therefore bore a certain personal responsibility, which he fully accepted.

*The Danish Representative* observed that the question was not a simple one. He understood that the sum mentioned by the French representative was for the development of the area in which the internees were being settled. It represented the cost of irrigation, buildings, &c. This development would be of some advantage to Syria, and in calculating what sum should be refunded to the Syrian budget attention must be paid to the permanent value to Syria of the work undertaken.

*The President* thought that the committee must, in the first place, recognise that the French Government had helped to solve a difficult problem. In his view they might be entitled to a refund of some part, at all events, of the expense to which they had been put, but the point which chiefly concerned him was what would happen if there was no Assyrian settlement fund from which a refund could be made. It was possible that there might be no settlement scheme or that there might be difficulties about the financing of any settlement scheme. The question was whether in such a case the League of Nations would have to take the responsibility of any refund to the French Government.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that the committee as a whole would certainly be grateful to the French Government for having solved this tiresome problem of the internees. He was, therefore, all the more reluctant to give any appearance of criticising what had been done. At the same time the present French proposal raised an important question of principle. The committee had been given to understand that negotiations were being conducted directly between Iraq and France for the temporary settlement of the families of the internees. It now appeared that instead of settling the internees in a temporary manner, the French Government had decided to take the risk of settling them on what might be called a permanent basis. They had done this, however, without consulting the Council Committee in any way, and the Council Committee had had no opportunity of examining the scheme, and, more particularly, the estimated cost. It seemed rather difficult, therefore, to expect the League to assume the responsibility for an operation over which it had had no control.

*The French Representative* observed that the scheme had been worked out and the estimates prepared by the representative of the Nansen Office, which was an accredited organisation of the League.

It was pointed out, however, by M. Arocha and by the *United Kingdom Representative* that the French Government had merely asked for the services of M. Burnier in order to control the entry of the internees into Syria and to keep the accounts once they had arrived there. It was this limited task which had been given to M. Burnier, and it had been made clear in writing to the Nansen Office by the League Secretariat that M. Burnier had no authority to go beyond this limited task.

*The French Representative* said that he appreciated the points which had been raised, and he would like to consider the matter further in the light of them. It was agreed that the discussion should be continued at a later meeting.

J. C. STERNDAL BENNETT.

Geneva, September 27, 1934.



[E 6107/1/93]

No. 68.

*United Kingdom Delegate to Foreign Office.—(Received October 1.)*

(No. 158.)

THE United Kingdom delegate to the League of Nations presents his compliments, and has the honour to transmit copies of a record of the thirty-fourth meeting of the Council Committee on the 26th September respecting the Assyrian question, a copy of which has been sent to His Majesty's Ambassador, Bagdad.

*United Kingdom Delegation,  
Geneva, September 28, 1934.*

Enclosure in No. 68.

ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

*Record of Thirty-fourth Meeting of the Assyrian Committee held on  
September 26, 1934, at 10 A.M.*

THE committee had before it a draft report to the Council.

*The President* said that, before examining this in detail, there were two general observations which he wished to make. In the first place, he thought that the idea should be developed in the report that the committee was impressed by the urgent need of a solution, and that the fact that it was sending out commissions of enquiry which would need a certain time for the accomplishment of their task did not mean that it had overlooked considerations of urgency. The other observation concerned the Mosul camp. In this respect the report needed to be completed after a discussion with the Iraqi delegate, who had been asked to attend the meeting at a later stage. He proposed to tell the Iraqi delegate that the committee had taken note of the suggestion in the Iraqi delegation's letter of the 31st August that the closure of the Mosul camp was under consideration. He proposed then to recall the previous statement of the Iraqi delegate that the Mosul camp would be maintained until the whole resettlement operation was finished.

*The French Representative* said that as regards urgency the committee must not let this consideration interfere with the desirability of ensuring that any particular place was suitable and of obtaining every guarantee against the Assyrians being thrown from one uncertain situation into another.

*The President* thought that the despatch of missions of investigation showed the committee's preoccupation on this score. His wish to insert a passage about the urgency of the problem in the report was to forestall criticism, which he anticipated from a section of public opinion, to the effect that the committee by sending out commissions was simply wasting time and postponing a decision.

*The United Kingdom Representative* asked the committee to consider very carefully what should be said to Jafar Pasha on the subject of the Mosul camp. It was quite true that Taufiq Beg Suwaidi had, in January last, given an assurance that the Iraqi Government would maintain the camp until the settlement operation had been completely carried out. The committee would no doubt be justified in holding the Iraqi Government to the letter of this assurance, but the United Kingdom representative doubted whether it would be wise to do so. In the first place, Taufiq Beg Suwaidi had, at a later stage, indicated that, if the Brazilian scheme broke down, the maintenance of the camp might have to be reconsidered, and he had foreshadowed that the Council Committee would in due course be consulted on this point. In the second place, it was a very difficult thing to decide whether the maintenance of the camp was in itself desirable. He thought that the committee would do well to hold the Iraqi Government to their more general assurances regarding the welfare and security of the Assyrians rather than to this particular assurance about the maintenance of the Mosul camp, which was only one means of ensuring the welfare of the Assyrians. He thought that the specific measures to give effect to the general assurances should be left to

the Iraqi Government. If the committee began to advocate any particular method, it assumed a responsibility which it had hitherto been careful to avoid. He thought, therefore, that the best course would be for the committee merely to show its concern at the closure of the camp and to bring before Jafar Pasha certain considerations which it hoped that the Iraqi Government would take into account before reaching a decision.

The discussion, at this point, was postponed until after detailed consideration of the draft report.

The draft report was accepted in principle, it being left to the Secretariat to complete it in two or three particulars. The discussion regarding the Mosul camp was then resumed.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that the main argument for the closure of the camp was, in his view, not the financial one, since any alternative scheme would presumably cost money, but the doubt whether maintenance in a camp was in the interests of the Assyrians themselves. It had undoubtedly a pauperising and demoralising effect. On the other hand, it would be, perhaps, unfortunate if the camp were closed at the present stage, when fresh prospects of settlement outside Iraq had just come to light. It was certain that if the Assyrians were moved from the camp into the villages, many of them would go unwillingly and the committee would be bombarded with petitions. There was certain, in consequence, to be an agitation by the Assyrian sympathisers and the issue of settlement was likely to be obscured.

*The Danish Representative* expressed the view that the committee ought to recommend the maintenance of the camp at least until the results of the missions of investigation were known. It would be better, in any case, if the camp was maintained during the coming winter.

*The President* then outlined the statement which he proposed to make to the Iraqi delegate based on the various considerations which had been put forward.

Jafar Pasha, accompanied by M. Shabandar and Major Edmonds, then joined the meeting.

*The President* informed Jafar Pasha that committee had received communications from the United Kingdom Government and the French Government respectively, regarding the prospects of settlement in British Guiana and French West Africa. The committee proposed to take all necessary measures to see before any decision was reached that the conditions in the territories concerned were suitable for the Assyrians. They proposed to proceed as in the case of Brazil and to send missions of investigation. After obtaining all necessary guarantees in this way, they would make recommendations to the Council.

*The President* then thanked the Iraqi delegate for the information contained in the situation reports which the Iraqi Government had submitted periodically and which the committee had carefully studied. There was one report which called for observations, namely, the letter of the 31st August. That letter stated that an agreement had been reached with the French Government for the transfer to Syria of the families of the Assyrian internees in Syria. The committee wished to congratulate the French and Iraqi Governments on the happy outcome of these negotiations. In the second place, the letter stated the intention of the Iraqi Government to appoint a Ministerial Committee to study the possibility of closing the Mosul camp and to find some more practical arrangement. The reasons given for the closure of the camp were that the numbers of the refugees in the camp had been reduced as a result of the agreement with the French Government, and that the Council Committee was evidently finding it impossible to discover a place of settlement outside Iraq. As regards the second reason, the situation had now changed, and in view of the fresh possibilities which had been opened up, the committee wished to know whether the Iraqi Government would persist in its intention to close the camp or would reconsider the question.

*Jafar Pasha* said that the Iraqi Government had set up the camp to help the Assyrians in a spirit of goodwill and in accordance with the promises which it had made regarding the welfare of the Assyrians. He wished to emphasise that when the closure of the camp had been considered there was no intention whatever of pushing the inhabitants into the desert. Some 800 persons still remained



in the camp after the transfer to Syria of the families of the internees; some of them had relatives in villages, and it was proposed that they should be settled with these relatives and given sufficient money for their maintenance for four or five months. Others who had no relatives the Government proposed to assist from time to time. When the camp had been set up it was expected that settlement outside Iraq would take place within a few months. Maintenance in a camp was then regarded as the most economic and suitable method of looking after the Assyrians. Unfortunately, however, camp life had a demoralising effect. Moreover, there were Assyrians outside the camp who were jealous of the special measures which were taken for the maintenance of the inhabitants in the camp. The closure of the camp was in any case only a proposal. It had not yet been put into effect. A committee had been formed to study the question, and Jafar Pasha could not say what the attitude of the Iraqi Government would be in the new circumstances created by the offers from His Majesty's Government and the French Government. He would refer the point to his Government and inform the committee regarding their attitude as soon as possible.

*The President* thanked Jafar Pasha and expressed the hope that the Iraqi Government would take into consideration not only the new situation which had been created, but also the approach of winter. The committee recollected that the Iraqi Government had given general assurances relating to the safety and welfare of the Assyrians pending their emigration elsewhere, and they must leave it to the Iraqi Government to decide upon the particular methods of giving effect to these assurances. At the same time, they hoped that if the Mosul camp were closed, arrangements not less favourable to the Assyrians and not less efficacious would be adopted. If the situation of the Assyrians would, in fact, be bettered by the closure of the camp, then, of course, the committee would be only too glad.

*The President* asked whether any other member of the committee wished to make observations.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that there was one other consideration which the president had not mentioned. New hope had been raised by the possibilities of settlement in British Guiana and in French West Africa, and it would be a pity if the issue were obscured at this moment by the complaints which might be expected to follow the closure of the camp from some, at all events, of the Assyrians who would perhaps return unwillingly to the villages. It was a psychological consideration, but the whole Assyrian problem might well be complicated in this way.

*The Danish Representative* observed that the Iraqi Government proposed to provide the inhabitants of the camp with funds for four or five months. This would maintain them at the outside until February or March. Was it possible for them to cultivate and become self-supporting before they had spent this money?

*Jafar Pasha* said that he had perhaps not made himself clear. One section of the inhabitants of the camp had relatives outside, and these relatives, with whom they would be settled, had means. As regards those inhabitants of the camp who had no relatives, the Government proposed to support them periodically until they were definitely settled.

*The Mexican Representative* asked what was the prevailing opinion among officials in Iraq regarding the maintenance of the camp.

*Jafar Pasha* said that when the question was considered previously the prevailing opinion was that the camp was an unsatisfactory method of dealing with the Assyrians. The British and French propositions, however, undoubtedly created a different situation, which the Iraqi Government would certainly consider. In any case the committee might feel assured that any alternative to the maintenance of the camp would be equally effective and advantageous to the Assyrians. It was the wish of the Iraqi Government to do their best for the welfare of the Assyrians. They would look after them as children and as friends. They wished to live as brothers with all people of whatever race who were under their rule and living on their territory.

The Iraqi delegation then withdrew.

*The President* said that the secretariat was not yet in a position to submit a list of candidates for the proposed mission of investigation to British Guiana.

*The United Kingdom Representative*, in reply to a question from the president, said that he had been in telephonic communication with Brigadier Browne, and that the latter had told him that he was definitely willing to go to British Guiana if he received an invitation. Brigadier Browne had certain arrangements to make before he could go, but he said that a maximum of three weeks would be sufficient for this purpose, and that he hoped to be able to leave by the middle of October. He had also expressed the view that a three months' stay in the colony would not be necessary, and he intended, having in view the urgency of the problem, to cut it down to the minimum consistent with a careful examination of the territory.

*The President* said that as regards French West Africa the committee had, at its last meeting, asked the French Government for further information. This information was likely to be a little delayed, but if it arrived during the present session, the question of sending a mission of investigation to French West Africa also would be considered. In any case, the sum which the Council was being asked to sanction was estimated on the assumption that two missions would have to be sent.

*M. Arocha* said that it had been arranged for the Assyrian question to be taken by the Council on the following morning if the committee's report could be ready in time.

It was agreed that the next meeting of the committee should be held, after the Council had risen, to discuss details regarding the mission of investigation to British Guiana.

Geneva, September 27, 1934.

[E 6116/1/93]

No. 69.

*Eighty-second Session of the Council, League of Nations.*

*Extract from Final Minutes of the Fifth Meeting, Public and Private, held on September 28, 1934, Geneva.*

*Settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq.*

JA'FAR PASHA-AL-ASKARI, representative of Iraq, came to the Council table.

*M. López Oliván* presented the following report and resolution<sup>(1)</sup>:-

"The report of our Committee on the Settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq (document C.427.1934.VII) is evidence that the appeal which the Council made to Governments on the 7th June, 1934, was not made in vain.

"In letters dated the 22nd and 24th September, 1934 (document C.427.1934.VII), the Governments of the United Kingdom and France have made proposals, which are now being considered by the committee, for the possible settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq in British Guiana and the bend of the Niger in West Africa. It is also possible that other proposals may be made by the six Governments that have not yet replied.

"I am sure you will agree that the Council should tender its heartiest thanks to the Governments of the United Kingdom and France for the valuable co-operation they are offering the committee.

"You will doubtless have noticed the special importance attached by your committee to preliminary enquiries being made on the spot by persons whose ability and integrity afford every guarantee of the successful settlement of the Assyrians under the League's auspices. The Governments of the United Kingdom and France themselves requested in their letters that these missions of enquiry should be despatched. You will, I feel sure, vote the necessary funds and leave the committee entirely free to make its choice among the candidates and to come to any other arrangements that may be desirable.

<sup>(1)</sup> Document C.429(1).1934.VII.



"You will certainly wish to express your satisfaction and to congratulate the Governments of France and Iraq on the happy issue of the direct negotiations that have led to the settlement of some 2,000 Assyrians in Syria pending the final decision on the problem as a whole.

"I beg to move the following resolution:—

"The Council:

"Approves the committee's report and the present report;

"Thanks the Governments of the United Kingdom and France for the proposals they have made to the committee for the possible settlement, in the Rapununi area in British Guiana and in the bend of the Niger in West Africa, of such of the Assyrians of Iraq as may express the desire to leave that country; and

"Authorises the Secretary-General to draw, in accordance with article 33 (2) of the Financial Regulations, a sum not exceeding 50,000 Swiss francs from the item "Working Capital Fund," to meet the cost of preliminary enquiries with a view to the settlement of such Assyrians as may wish to leave Iraq. These expenses will be repaid to the League out of the funds that will be made available for financing the scheme as a whole."

Mr. Eden did not wish to make any comments on the details of the report before the Council, for, as regards the possibilities of settlement in British Guiana, he could add nothing to what was contained in the note of the 22nd September from the United Kingdom Government. He would, however, be glad to take the opportunity of associating himself warmly with what the *rapporteur* had said about the agreement relating to the transfer to Syria, and the provisional accommodation there, of the families of those Assyrians who had been interned in Syria last year. That agreement would, he felt sure, be welcomed by all the members of the Council on humanitarian grounds, and as putting an end to a state of affairs which had been a potential source of discontent, and therefore of friction. It did credit both to the French and to the Iraqi Governments, to both of whom Mr. Eden desired to pay a tribute for the spirit of accommodation which had made possible the liquidation of this important, if subsidiary, aspect of the Assyrian problem.

M. Massigli desired to tender his thanks to the representative of the United Kingdom and to the *rapporteur* for the tribute they had just paid to his Government's endeavours to promote a solution—if only a partial solution—of the Assyrian problem. There had been special difficulties, arising out of local circumstances, but these had been successfully overcome, thanks to the authority of the League, the assistance of the committee and the goodwill of the Iraqi Government, and also, M. Massigli felt bound to say, to the valuable aid rendered on the spot by Dr. Burnier, the representative of the Refugees Office.

Cemal Hüsnü Bey said that he wished to associate himself very warmly with the *rapporteur's* thanks to the Governments of the United Kingdom and of France. One radical and wholly satisfactory solution of the question which had been engaging the Council's attention for some time past, and one which was in the interests of the Assyrian people itself, would undoubtedly be settlement in countries such as those proposed by the United Kingdom and French Governments. Accordingly, in agreeing to the appointment of a mission of enquiry, the representative of Turkey would, here and now, offer it his best wishes for the success of its work.

The President noted that the members of the Council were unanimous in paying a grateful tribute to the Powers for the practical efforts they were now making to solve a highly important problem.

The resolution was adopted.

(Ja'far Pasha-al-Askari withdrew.)

[E 6171/1/93]

No. 70.

# ASSYRIAN QUESTION.

(Confidential.)

*Record of the Thirty-Fifth Meeting of the Council Committee, held on September 28, 1934, at 3 P.M.—(Communicated by United Kingdom Delegation at Geneva; Received October 4, 1934.)*

## Selection of Mission to British Guiana.

The President said that the main task of the committee was to select the mission of investigation to go to British Guiana. Before candidates were considered, however, a point of principle had arisen regarding the inclusion or otherwise of a representative of the Nansen Office.

The attached letter from Major Johnson was then read (Annex A).

M. Arocha explained that the conversation referred to in the letter had taken place when Major Johnson had called upon him to ask whether a Nansen Office representative would be invited to join the mission to British Guiana. M. Arocha had replied that he did not think that the committee intended to issue such an invitation. Major Johnson had then expressed the opinion that it was essential for the Nansen Office to be represented. In the report of the Governing Body mention had been made of the continued co-operation of the Nansen Office in this question, and, if the Nansen Office were not represented on the mission to British Guiana, public opinion might take it as in some way a reflection upon the Nansen Office, and might gain the impression that the Nansen Office was being set aside. M. Arocha had said that the committee had no such idea. The co-operation which the Nansen Office had hitherto given was considered extremely valuable, and Major Johnson was evidently under a misunderstanding. M. Arocha had recalled the text of the Council Committee's resolution of the 31st October last, which made it clear that the co-operation of the Nansen Office would be invited, when a destination had been found and under conditions to be laid down by the committee. In the case of Brazil there were special reasons why the Nansen Office should have been represented on the preliminary mission of investigation, as the whole scheme was one which the Nansen Office had produced, and it had been anticipated that its entire execution would be in the hands of the Nansen Office. In the present case, however, it was a question of a proposal made by a Government, and it was not yet clear how the scheme would be organised, if it were found suitable. Major Johnson would also appreciate the difficulty which the committee felt in sending a mission composed entirely, or in the main, of British subjects to a British colony. Major Johnson had professed to understand this point, but had indicated that he thought it desirable for some representative of the Nansen Office other than himself to be sent out to British Guiana and for the Nansen Office to co-operate in the whole scheme, *i.e.*, not only in the preliminary measures but also in the settlement itself, until such time as the Assyrians had been completely assimilated and all the money advanced to them had been paid back. M. Arocha had said that he had no doubt that the co-operation of the Nansen Office would be welcomed by the committee, at all events for the preparatory work, but he could not yet say to what extent the services of any organisation would be required in British Guiana for the actual work of settlement. In any case the extracts from the reports of the Governing Body, the Managing Committee and the Finance Commission, quoted in Major Johnson's letter, showed that the Nansen Office, as a body, was not disposed to collaborate in the work of Assyrian settlement until sufficient funds had been subscribed and the place of settlement had been fixed.

M. Arocha, after reporting this conversation, expressed the view that the extracts quoted by Major Johnson in his letter showed clearly that the committee was not obliged to accept the collaboration of the Nansen Office. It was a point, however, on which the committee must decide.

The President said that it was really a question of interpreting resolutions by the Governing Body and by committees of the Nansen Office. He doubted whether Major Johnson was in a position to interpret these resolutions, and, if the committee desired the position to be cleared up, he thought that the best method would be a letter to the president of the Nansen Office.



*The United Kingdom Representative* said that he also had had a conversation with Major Johnson, when the latter had advanced much the same views as those which M. Arocha had reported. The United Kingdom representative had taken the line that the committee must consider each case on its merits and adopt the procedure most suited to the circumstances. It was an entire misapprehension to suppose that, if a Nansen Office representative were not included in the mission of enquiry to British Guiana, this meant that the committee was dissatisfied with the Nansen Office. Nor did he think that public opinion would form any such impression. It was known that the Nansen Office was still co-operating in the Assyrian question. Appreciative references had, in fact, been made only that morning in the Council to the work which its representative in Syria had done in connexion with the transfer of the Assyrian families to Syria. It was true that the committee had adopted a resolution on the 31st October, 1933, regarding its intention to utilise the services of the Nansen Office in regard to any plan of settlement, but only after a certain stage had been reached and under conditions to be laid down later. The United Kingdom representative had said to Major Johnson that the services of the Nansen Office would, he thought, almost certainly be required in some degree in connexion with the British Guiana scheme, if it were put into effect. For instance, it was contemplated that the Nansen Office should in any case be concerned in the preparatory work in Iraq, and the degree of its further co-operation would be a matter for the committee to decide at the proper moment. Whether the services of the Nansen Office would be required in connexion with the actual settlement operation inside British Guiana was a matter to be decided later. He had felt bound, however, to point out that in the memorandum attached to His Majesty's Government's note of the 22nd September, it had been contemplated that the settlement would form part of the ordinary district administration of the colony. But the immediate question was the composition of a mission of investigation to look into a certain scheme and not the eventual means by which that scheme should be executed, if found suitable; and in considering this question, a very material fact, as he had indicated to Major Johnson, was that the committee, since passing its resolution of the 31st October, had been led in various ways to believe that the Nansen Office, as a body, was not anxious to be saddled with responsibility for schemes for the settlement of the Assyrians in such remote areas as South America. The attitude of M. Werner at various meetings of the committee and in personal conversations had made this clear. Moreover, the resolutions quoted in Major Johnson's letter to M. Arocha spoke for themselves, and Major Johnson, in the last paragraph of the letter under consideration, specifically stated that it was the desire of the Governing Body to refrain from accepting responsibility concerning the choice of the country for the settlement of the Assyrians. Major Johnson, in his conversation with the United Kingdom representative, had again admitted that this was the case, and the United Kingdom representative considered this to be quite conclusive.

*The President* agreed, and said that he did not think it necessary to consider the question further. He did not, however, wish the Nansen Office to have any sense of grievance, and he thought that the best thing might be to keep the president of the Nansen Office *au courant* with what the committee was doing in British Guiana, so that the Nansen Office might be in a position to co-operate, if required, at any given moment, with full knowledge of the facts. In that way, any idea of a slight could be removed.

This procedure was agreed to.

The committee then proceeded to the selection of the mission of enquiry in British Guiana.

*The President* recalled that it had already been agreed that it should consist of an Assyrian expert and an agricultural expert, and that in the former capacity Brigadier-General Browne should be appointed. For the post of agricultural expert three names were available. The first was that of Signor Guido Renzo Giglioli, who was about thirty years of age, and who had been proposed by the Italian representative. Signor Giglioli was a member of the Royal Colonial Institute of Agriculture in Florence, and had already visited British Guiana as a member of an Italian scientific expedition. The second

candidate was M. Krolkowski, who was forty years of age, had been for a long time a director in the Ministry of Agriculture in Poland, spoke French and German well, but no English. The third candidate was M. Auguste Iwanski, who was in the forties, had been agricultural adviser to the Polish Embassies in Paris and Washington, and was at present Director of the Chamber of Agriculture at Vilno. He spoke French and English well.

*The Italian Representative* said that he had ascertained that Signor Giglioli was prepared to proceed to British Guiana at once, if invited to do so by the committee.

It was unanimously agreed that Signor Giglioli, in view of his previous experience in British Guiana, should be appointed.

The committee then considered the instructions to be issued to Brigadier Browne and Signor Giglioli, and these were eventually approved in the form of the attached letters (Annexes B and C).

#### *Message to the Assyrians.*

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that it had been indicated to him that, unless the present position were carefully explained to the Assyrians in Iraq, they might, on hearing of the British Guiana scheme, conclude that their settlement outside Iraq was already assured and cease cultivation. This would be disastrous, for, even if the British Guiana scheme were proved suitable, it was clear that only a small advance party at the outside would be able to go to the colony during the present season, since, after the report of the mission of investigation had been received, the wishes of the Assyrians would have to be consulted, questions of finance settled, and many preparations completed, both in Iraq and British Guiana. The season for emigration ended in April, after which the rains began. It was clear, therefore, that practically all the Assyrians would have to remain in Iraq during the coming winter at all events, and many of them might be there until next autumn at least. It was essential, therefore, that they should continue their agricultural life. In the circumstances he felt that the committee would be justified in urging the Iraqi Government to explain matters to the Assyrians in the interests of all concerned, and he had prepared a draft letter to the Iraqi delegate for consideration.

After a short discussion this draft was accepted in the form of the letter attached as Annex D.

#### *French West Africa.*

*The President* asked when the further information which the French Government had been asked to furnish would be available. *The French Representative* said that new documents had arrived from the territory concerned containing a considerable amount of information, which would need rather careful consideration. There were various factors involved, and he thought it would not be possible to rely on the information being available to the committee until about the end of October.

*The President* proposed, and it was agreed, that on receipt of the further information it should be analysed and distributed by the Secretariat, and that a further meeting should be held as soon as possible to consider whether a mission of investigation should be despatched. Meanwhile, this question remained open.

In reply to a question by the President, the *French Representative* said that he thought that a mission of investigation to French West Africa would require only two months for the accomplishment of its task. The French authorities estimated that it would require three weeks on the spot and two weeks each way for the journey.

*The President* observed that, in these circumstances, it seemed possible that matters could be so arranged that the report of the mission, if sent, might be available for consideration by the committee simultaneously with the report of the mission from British Guiana.



## Annex A.

*Major Johnson to M. Arocha.*

September 27, 1934.

Dear M. Arocha,

WITH reference to our conversation this morning regarding the co-operation of the office in the settlement of the Assyrian refugees of Iraq, the following are the references to that question in the report of the Governing Body to the Assembly:—

"The close and active co-operation of the office has been invoked by the Assyrian Committee of the Council appointed to consider the question of the settlement outside Iraq of the Assyrians, who might decide they could not settle permanently in Iraq, following the conflict between Iraqi and Assyrian forces in the summer of 1933."

*Extract from Resolution adopted by the Assyrian Committee in October 1933.*

"Finally, it decides that, once a destination has been agreed upon for the Assyrians who wish to leave Iraq, the task of preparing and executing plans for the transfer and settlement of these Assyrians shall be entrusted, under conditions which will be defined later by the committee, to the Nansen Office, working in close collaboration, through the League Secretariat, with the Council Committee."

"At the request of the Council, it (the committee) decided to consider the question of finding elsewhere a suitable home for the Assyrians, and, in response to its request, the office will continue to afford its co-operation to the committee for the examination of settlement proposals which may be brought to its attention."

The above extracts are taken from chapter IV (1) (b) of the report of the Governing Body (document A.12.1934).

It may also interest you to be acquainted with the following extracts from the reports of the last meetings of the Governing Body and of the Managing Committee of the office relative to the same subject:—

*Extract from the Report of the Ninth Session of the Governing Body held on the 25th April, 1934.*

"Après discussion, le conseil d'administration confirme la décision de la Commission mixte du 17 avril, conformément à laquelle l'Office ne pourra en aucun cas collaborer à cette œuvre, soit directement par l'envoi en Irak d'un représentant de l'Office, soit même indirectement de toute autre façon, avant que des fonds suffisants soient mis à sa disposition pour l'action à entreprendre, et que le lieu d'établissement de ces réfugiés lui soit désigné d'une façon précise."

*Extract from the Report of the Eighth Session of the Managing Committee and Finance Commission held on the 3rd September, 1934:—*

"L'Office devra ainsi se borner à examiner les propositions qui lui seront soumises, et sa collaboration effective ne pourra être envisagée avant que des fonds suffisants soient mis à sa disposition pour l'action à entreprendre et que le lieu d'établissement de ces réfugiés lui soit désigné d'une façon précise."

It is, I think you will agree, quite clear from the foregoing extracts that it was merely the desire of the Governing Body to refrain from accepting responsibility concerning the choice of the country for the settlement of the Assyrians as well as for the raising of the funds necessary for their settlement, but that it was always perfectly willing to render the services contemplated in its resolution of October last, quoted in paragraph 3 above.

Yours sincerely,  
T. F. JOHNSON.

## Annex B.

*Secretary-General to Brigadier-General Browne.*

Geneva, September 28, 1934.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the Council Committee for the settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq has recently had under consideration a communication from the Government of the United Kingdom regarding the possibility of settlement in the Rupununi district of British Guiana. A report by the committee to the Council and a report by the Council's *rapporteur*, which deal, *inter alia*, with this communication, and which were adopted by the Council on the 28th September, 1934, are enclosed herewith.<sup>(1)</sup>

2. You will observe that it is proposed to send an independent and impartial mission of investigation to the area concerned at the earliest possible moment under the auspices of the League of Nations. The task of this mission will be to furnish the Council Committee with all the elements necessary to form an opinion as to whether, in the light of local physical and economic conditions and of Assyrian needs and characteristics, a scheme of settlement in the area concerned can be worked out under which the Assyrians can be expected to thrive and to become a useful element in British Guiana. For this purpose, the committee has reached the conclusion that the mission should be composed of two persons, one an expert in agricultural matters, and the other possessing special knowledge of the Assyrians.

3. The committee, remembering with appreciation your previous assistance in this latter capacity in connexion with the scheme for settlement in Brazil, desires to avail itself once more of your services, and is happy to learn that you are willing to form part of the new mission. It has decided to appoint as your colleague Signor Guido Renzo Giglioli, a member of the Royal Colonial Institute of Agriculture in Florence, who has already visited British Guiana as a member of an Italian scientific expedition in 1931, and is the author of a pamphlet on agricultural and economic conditions in that colony.

4. In view of the great urgency of finding a solution of the Assyrian problem, the committee desires that the mission shall proceed at the earliest possible moment to British Guiana, and that it shall complete its work there in the minimum time compatible with the importance of the task allotted to it. The committee would appreciate a preliminary telegraphic report as soon as the mission, after local investigation, is in a position to indicate generally whether or not, in its view, Assyrian settlement in the area concerned is likely to prove successful. This preliminary telegraphic report should be followed as soon as practicable by a detailed appreciation of the prospects, and if the mission considers these to be favourable, by any special recommendations which it may desire to make, and, if possible, by an estimate of the cost of settlement on a sliding-scale basis according to the numbers of Assyrians who may eventually elect to go to British Guiana. The committee understands from figures supplied by the Iraqi Government that the ex-Ottoman Assyrians in Iraq, who may have to be provided for, number 20,000. It is impossible at this stage to obtain any indication of the number who will wish to avail themselves of any settlement scheme, but the committee has hitherto worked on the assumption that it will be necessary to settle a minimum of 10,000.

5. In judging the suitability of the area, the *questionnaire*, which you took with you to Brazil and of which a copy is enclosed for convenience of reference, will again be a useful guide, and particular attention should be paid to health conditions, communications, the pastoral and agricultural potentialities of the area and the prospects of markets for produce.

6. It would clearly be useful if an early meeting could take place between yourself and Signor Giglioli at Geneva, to provide an opportunity of making financial and other necessary arrangements in connexion with your mission, and of consulting the League Secretariat on any points on which you may desire further information and guidance. I shall be glad if you will let me know the earliest date on which you can conveniently come to Geneva for this purpose.

7. A similar letter is being addressed to Signor Giglioli.

I have, &c.

Secretary-General.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.



## Enclosure in Annex B.

*Questions concerning the Suitability of Conditions in Parana for the Assyrians.*

## I. Climate.

## Temperature:—

- (a) Summer: (1) maximum; (2) mean; (3) minimum.  
 (b) Winter: (1) minimum; (2) mean.

Rainfall: average annual and rainy periods. Comparison of findings under paragraph I above with conditions in regions inhabited by Assyrians.

## II. Cultivation.

Report on crops most easily cultivated in Parana, with indications showing to what extent the Assyrians are accustomed to the cultivation of those crops, or should be able, without great difficulty, to adapt themselves to their cultivation.

## III. Cattle and Sheep Raising and Pig-Breeding.

Similar enquiries to those outlined in paragraph II.

## IV. Agricultural Settlement Conditions.

1. Possibility of village settlement on conditions similar to those to which the Assyrians are accustomed.
2. Are 5 alqueires per family sufficient for the reasonable requirements of an Assyrian family?
3. Prospects of becoming self-supporting.
4. Feasibility of establishing two separate settlements.

## V. Other Occupations.

Prospects of employment for other than agricultural categories, eventually by means of the creation of an agricultural adaptation centre.

## VI. Food.

Could the reasonable food requirements of the Assyrians be satisfied at accessible prices?

## VII. Medical Attention.

## VIII. Religion.

Would the Assyrians be allowed facilities for the practice of their religion under the direction of their own religious leader?

## IX. Schools.

Similar enquiry to that under paragraph VIII (religion).

## Annex C.

*Secretary-General to Signor Giglioli.*

Sir,

Geneva, September 28, 1934.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that on the 14th October, 1933, the Council of the League of Nations set up a committee consisting of six of its members (the representatives of Spain, Denmark, France, Italy, Mexico and the United Kingdom), under the presidency of the representative of Spain, to consider the problem of the settlement outside Iraq of the Assyrians who wished to leave that country. The attached copy of an appeal<sup>(1)</sup> which was addressed to various

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

Governments on the 11th June last will explain how that problem has arisen and the steps which have been taken towards its solution.

2. The Council Committee has recently had under consideration a communication from the Government of the United Kingdom regarding the possibilities of settlement in the Rupununi district of British Guiana. A report by the committee to the Council and a report by the Council's *rapporteur*, which deal, *inter alia*, with this communication and which were adopted by the Council on the 28th September, 1934, are also enclosed herewith.<sup>(1)</sup>

3. You will observe that it is proposed to send an independent and impartial mission of investigation to the area concerned at the earliest possible moment under the auspices of the League of Nations. The task of this mission will be to furnish the Council Committee with all the elements necessary to form an opinion as to whether, in the light of local physical and economic conditions and of Assyrian needs and characteristics, a scheme of settlement in the area concerned can be worked out under which the Assyrians can be expected to thrive and to become a useful element in British Guiana.

4. For this purpose the committee has reached the conclusion that the mission should be composed of two persons, one an expert in agricultural matters and the other possessing special knowledge of the Assyrians. The committee considers itself fortunate to find in you an agricultural expert with some previous personal experience of British Guiana. It accordingly desires to avail itself of your services and is happy to learn that you are willing to form part of the mission. It has decided to appoint as your colleague Brigadier-General J. G. Browne, C.M.G., C.B.E., D.S.O., who, for eight years, commanded the Assyrian Levies in Iraq and earlier this year visited Brazil on a mission similar to that now contemplated on behalf of the Council Committee.

5. In view of the great urgency of finding a solution of the Assyrian problem, the committee desires that the mission shall proceed at the earliest possible moment to British Guiana and that it shall complete its work there in the minimum time compatible with the importance of the task allotted to it. The committee would appreciate a preliminary telegraphic report as soon as the mission, after local investigation, is in a position to indicate generally whether or not, in its views, Assyrian settlement in the area concerned is likely to prove successful. This preliminary telegraphic report should be followed as soon as practicable by a detailed appreciation of the prospects, and if the mission considers these to be favourable, by any special recommendations which it may desire to make, and if possible, by an estimate of the cost of settlement on a sliding-scale basis according to the numbers of Assyrians who may eventually elect to go to British Guiana. The committee understands from figures supplied by the Iraqi Government that the ex-Ottoman Assyrians in Iraq who may have to be provided for number 20,000. It is impossible at this stage to obtain any indication of the number who will wish to avail themselves of any settlement scheme, but the committee has hitherto worked on the assumption that it will be necessary to settle a minimum of 10,000.

6. In judging the suitability of the area, the *questionnaire* which was taken out by the earlier mission to Brazil, and of which a copy is enclosed,<sup>(2)</sup> will be a useful guide, and particular attention should be paid to health conditions, communications, the pastoral and agricultural potentialities of the area and the prospects of markets for produce.

7. It would clearly be useful if an early meeting could take place between yourself and Brigadier-General Browne at Geneva to provide an opportunity of making financial and other necessary arrangements in connexion with your mission and of consulting the League Secretariat on any points on which you may desire further information and guidance. I shall be glad if you will let me know the earliest date on which you can conveniently come to Geneva for this purpose.

8. A similar letter is being addressed to Brigadier-General Browne.

I have, &c.

Secretary-General.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

<sup>(2)</sup> Enclosure in Annex B.



## Annex D.

*Committee for Settlement of Assyrians of Iraq to Permanent Delegation of Iraq to League of Nations.*

Sir,

Geneva, September 28, 1934.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the Council Committee for the Settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq to-day decided on the composition of the proposed mission of investigation into the possibilities of settlement in British Guiana. Considering that this mission should consist of two persons, one possessing special knowledge of the Assyrians, and the other an expert knowledge of agricultural matters, the committee decided to appoint Brigadier-General J. G. Browne, C.M.G., C.B.E., D.S.O., who is already known to you, and Signor Guido Renzo Giglioli, a member of the Royal Colonial Institute of Agriculture in Florence.

2. A decision regarding the despatch of a mission of investigation to French West Africa will be taken after consideration of further information regarding that territory, which the French Government has been asked to furnish.

3. The Iraqi Government will no doubt consider it desirable to make an early announcement to the Assyrians on the subject of the fresh efforts which are being made to find a place of settlement for them outside Iraq. While it is for the Iraqi Government to decide upon the nature of such an announcement, it is naturally to the interest of all concerned in the solution of this question to guard against any misunderstanding of the position which might lead to premature conclusions or exaggerated hopes.

4. The committee accordingly desires me to suggest the advisability of making it clear to the Assyrians that investigations into the possibilities of settlement in British Guiana and in French West Africa are still only in the preliminary stage, and that, although the committee is doing its best to expedite matters and hopes that its efforts may eventually be crowned with success, the territories now under consideration have yet to be proved suitable for Assyrian settlement, and no definite scheme of settlement is yet in being.

5. The situation is, in fact, similar to that which existed when, in my letter of the 9th April last, I forwarded to the Iraqi permanent delegate a message for communication to the Assyrians; and the committee is therefore quite willing to authorise the Iraqi Government, should the latter consider it desirable to do so, to inform the Assyrians of the committee's view that the advice contained in that message still holds good.

6. It is, I feel sure, unnecessary for me to add that the committee, in reaffirming this advice, continues to rely implicitly upon the Iraqi Government to take all possible measures for the well-being and protection of the Assyrians and for the maintenance of stability and order in the areas where they may reside until emigration shall be possible.

I have, &amp;c.

[E 6267/1/93]

No. 71.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon—(Received October 8.)*

(No. 36. Saving.)

(Telegraphic.) *En clair.*

Bagdad, October 4, 1934.

MY telegram No. 221, first paragraph.

Major Thomson, who is now in Bagdad on Assyrian business, informs me that the attitude of the Assyrians towards the British Guiana project is at present one of reserve. They are ignorant. British Guiana is far away, to be reached only after the imagined but unknown perils of an ocean voyage. It is near the Equator, and the word Guiana in Syriac is synonymous with Gehenna—Hell. The Officer Commanding Iraq Levies, in recent conversation, seemed to confirm the above impression, saying that the Assyrians of his acquaintance, after their disappointment over Brazil, are so far not showing great enthusiasm.

There is no doubt that the ardent followers of the Mar Shimun wish to leave Iraq, and their final attitude to British Guiana depends entirely on the lead they are given by the Patriarch. On the other hand, the Ashutis from Amadia, who were not affected by last year's troubles, have informed Major Thomson that they desire to be the last of the Assyrians to leave Iraq. If the French subordinate officials in Syria continue to show signs of welcoming Assyrian immigrants, this will also add to their uncertainty and perplexity.

[E 6376/1/93]

No. 72.

*Sir John Simon to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes (Bagdad).*

(No. 717.)

Foreign Office, October 18, 1934.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 599 of the 11th October reporting on the measures which the Iraqi Government have decided to take as to the disposal of the Assyrian refugees in the Mosul camp and of the destitute Assyrian families in Mosul outside that camp.

2. That the Iraqi Government should have decided to take measures for the relief of this latter category of persons is, I consider, a satisfactory development. I note also that in the opinion of Major Thomson and Sir Kinahan Cornwallis the eviction from the Mosul camp on the terms proposed of categories C and D of the present inmates is not unreasonable. I trust, however, that the Iraqi Government will do everything possible to ensure the welfare of the persons in these categories after their departure from the camp, in fulfilment of the repeated assurances which have been given to the League by successive Iraqi representatives at Geneva. Persons in category D will presumably join their relatives elsewhere in Iraq, but it is not clear that homes will be available in this way for persons in category C, and I should be glad to learn what arrangements are being made for the settlement of such persons pending the outcome of the efforts which are being made to find a destination for the Assyrians outside Iraq.

3. Your despatch throws a somewhat unexpected light upon a communication dated the 8th October, of which a copy is enclosed herein, from the head of the permanent Iraqi delegation at Geneva to the Assyrian Committee. Until the receipt of your despatch I had assumed from that communication that the Iraqi Government had decided to maintain the camp in its entirety for a period of four months. This is the interpretation which will, I think, undoubtedly be placed upon the note by the members of the Assyrian Committee, to whom it has been circulated, and an unfortunate impression is likely to be created if it is subsequently discovered, as a result of all too probable Assyrian protests, that the note was in fact merely a cloak for the expulsion from the camp of some 270 persons.

4. It is in the interests of the Iraqi Government (and also in those of His Majesty's Government, now that the latter are in possession of the real facts and may otherwise be suspected of aiding and abetting their concealment) that any erroneous impression created by the Iraqi note of the 8th October should be dispelled as soon as possible, and you should take an early opportunity to give strong but unofficial advice to the Iraqi Government to supplement the note of the 8th October, in order to forestall complaints and criticism, by a further communication explaining precisely how the Iraqi Government intend to dispose, or have disposed, of the refugees in the Mosul camp, and also what measures they have decided to take for the relief of the destitute families outside the camp.

5. With reference to paragraph 7 of your despatch I shall be glad if you will report whether Major Thomson is proposing to leave Iraq permanently or whether his return to this country is merely for the purpose of leave.

I am, &amp;c.

JOHN SIMON.



[E 6485/1/93]

No. 73.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received October 22.)*

(No. 581.)

Sir,

Bagdad, October 6, 1934.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 36, Saving, of the 4th October, I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of an interesting report<sup>(1)</sup> by His Majesty's acting-consul at Mosul, on a tour which he recently made of the districts bordering on the Turkish territories of Ashouta, Tiari and Tkhuma.

2. Mr. Finch had an opportunity of observing Assyrians of the settled Barwari and of the nomad Ashuti tribes living in their normal conditions, and he has noted their reluctance to emigrate. His report was, of course, written before the Assyrians had any knowledge of the British Guiana or West Africa settlement schemes, and his comments on these tribes seem to be in general agreement with the information given to me by Major Thomson. The Mar Shimun, in admitting that Bishop Mar Yawalaha of the Barwaris desired to remain in Iraq, commented on this prelate as the only one who did so, and who had "no followers and is a castaway even by members of his own family" (League of Nations Document C.Min./Ass./53, 14th August, 1934).

3. In paragraph 6 mention is made of the risk of looting by Kurds. This would occur particularly at the moment when the Assyrians on emigration were actually moving or endeavouring to dispose of their goods and chattels. The Apostolic Delegate and other Christian leaders have on several occasions given expression to this fear, adding that, during the troubles last year, the more decent-minded Kurds refrained from plundering the Assyrians, but saw others doing so with impunity and without being called upon to make restitution. It will therefore be hard for them to resist temptation on a future occasion. The spirit of unrighteousness has triumphed unpunished, and this I consider to be the most serious danger we have to face in the future.

I have, &amp;c.

G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

Enclosure in No. 73.

*Memorandum respecting a Tour in Barwari Bala, September 9-15, 1934.*

(No. 581. Confidential.)

FROM a base at the Royal Air Force summer camp at Sar Amadia, my route was Hesi-Baitanour-Shemayila-Iyat-Kani Massi-Douri-Helwa-Kiri-Avsarki-Baloka-Kara-Zeiwa, thence down the Greater Zab to Geli Zaraw (where the river breaks through the range north of the Amadia valley in 137 O/SE, 27 a and o), and back via Kani Mir Bedri and along the high ground of the Perasia range to Sar Amadia. Map references are Survey of Iraq, Sheet 137 O/SW, squares 24 and 30, and Sheet 137 O/SE, squares 19, 20, 25, 26 and 27; and carte de la frontière turco-irakienne, Sheets 4 (Arouch Achouta) and 5 (Zab). I was prevented from continuing down the magnificent gorge of Geli Zaraw by the track being unsafe for pack animals.

2. The region covered is the eastern portion of Barwari Bala, lying immediately south of the Turkish territories of Ashouta, Tiari and Tkhuma. Of roughly sixty villages in the Nahiyah of Kani Massi, about twenty-four, including Kani Massi itself, are Assyrian, the rest Kurdish. The settled Assyrians are of the Barwar tribe, whose bishop, Mar Yawalaha, lives at Douri, and they have occupied and owned this land for generations. The nomad Ashuti Assyrians also bring their flocks in summer into part of this district. I thus had an opportunity of seeing Assyrians in more or less their traditional state. The comparison with the uprooted and politically self-conscious Assyrians, with

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

which we are lately more familiar, was very favourable, and suggested what these people might become when contentedly settled.

3. The limited cultivable area looks fertile, well watered and well tilled, chiefly at this season, with rice, millet, and sesame. Potatoes have since the war been grown in certain places, and earlier in the year there is wheat, but hardly any barley. This is because there is a pressure of population upon the land, and all possible wheat is required for food. The houses are of stone, and a welcome change from the mud hovels of the plains.

4. The situation was quiet, and security for travellers good. The Rev. R. and Mrs. Cumberland, American missionaries of Dohuk, had passed through this and neighbouring regions a few weeks before, and needed less escort than for some years has been usual. A great deal of credit for this is due to the Kaimakam of Amadia, Majid Beg, who in the nahiyah in which I travelled has an excellent lieutenant in the Mudir of Kani Massi, Sheikh Ahmad Barzanja. Both are Kurds, and by everyone's account really administer their districts. They were both very courteous and hospitable to me. Majid Beg is to be promoted to mutessarif at Kut; and Mar Yawalaha stated very positively to me that, though the Assyrians of Barwar would be glad for his sake if he were promoted, they would be very sorry for their own if he left Amadia. Sheikh Ahmad Barzanja, who will act as kaimakam on Majid Beg's departure, was not at Kani Massi during the troubles of last year, but Majid Beg's record in keeping order in his Qadha during that time is doubtless known to you. It seems a pity that good Kurdish official should be sent to Kut rather than to Arbil, where the present mutessarif, Mahmoud Fakhri, is said to be anxious for a change.

5. The Barwar Assyrians appeared contented. I did not get an opportunity of seeing the Ashuti. No one, at any rate, brought any petition or grievance to me, as had been done in Mosul, Dohuk and Diana. I questioned the Mudir of Kani Massi and Mar Yawalaha about their attitude to emigration. The mudir said that they would never wish to emigrate, as their wealth is sunk in local property. The bishop said that they are now quite content as they are, but that if the rest of the Assyrians were moved to another part of the world, they would reconsider their attitude, not wishing to remain a very small minority of some 2,000 separated from their brethren. There will evidently be much searching of heart in Barwar in the choice between vested interests and fear of isolation. I myself incline to the bishop's view; they will reckon that they may not always be so fortunate in their officials.

6. Mr. Cumberland, who knows the district well, and makes due allowance for the native Christian's habit of raking up grievances to foreigners, is of the opinion that petty thefts by Kurds from Christians have increased since the events of last year, and particularly in the past four or five months. He attributes this to the fact that the looters of last year secured a great deal which they have not been made to disgorge. The remark does not apply to Barwari Bala so much as to other areas in which there is a mixed population. But the decisive factor, apart from the kaimakam, in keeping order in Barwar last summer was the principal Kurd, Haji Tatar Khan Beg, who labours under a sense of grievance that he received no good word from the Government for his action, whilst other Kurdish aghas who looted have been shown consideration. Haji Tatar Khan Beg says that, if trouble were to recur, he would no longer be able to restrain his men. The Mudir of Kani Massi stated to me that, whereas until last year the inhabitants referred to themselves indifferently as Barwaris, they now distinguish Kurd and Assyrian.

7. As to the purely Kurdish aspect of the situation, the surface is calm, but events in Turkey are being closely watched. As a preliminary to applying its new residence law, the Turkish Government has been disarming the Kurds of South-Eastern Turkey, and is said to be removing prominent aghas to Western Anatolia. Operations are in the hands of two columns, working from Mardin and Van respectively, and on the Turco-Iraqian frontier they had not yet proceeded as far east as the territory opposite Amadia at the time of my visit. According to report, they have been very successful. Matters were precipitated by the kidnapping and rape by Kurds of the family of the Kaimakam of Bait-al-Shabab, an incident that probably arose from private revenge. It is difficult to say what the reactions of the Iraqi Kurds are. On the one hand, drastic action on one side of the frontier causes unsettlement on the other; on the other hand, a feeling that the Kurds have received more generous treatment



in Iraq than in Turkey must be acting as a soothing influence. There have been no cases of taking asylum in Iraq. Those threatened in Turkey have put out feelers in Syria, but presumably without success, or there would have been more resistance.

J. P. G. FINCH.

Mosul, September 26, 1934.

[E 6496/1998/93]

No. 74.

Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received October 22.)

(No. 596.)

Sir,

Bagdad, October 10, 1934.

WITH reference to the third paragraph of my despatch No. 553 of the 19th September, I have the honour to inform you that the Criminal Court of Bagdad has now sentenced Abdul Qadir Ismail, the editor of the suspended newspaper, the *Ahali*, to a year's rigorous imprisonment, to be followed by police supervision for a further year, as a punishment for his share in distributing the letter in abuse of King Ghazi. Three other persons of no importance have received the same sentence.

2. These convictions have not, however, solved the mystery of the authorship of the letter, and, in the opinion of the British Deputy Inspector-General of Police attached to the Criminal Investigation Department, it is probable that the matter will never be cleared up, since the Scotland Yard trained head of the Criminal Investigation Department has just been transferred to a country district.

3. As mentioned in my despatch No. 595 of the 10th October, reporting the appointment of a new permanent Iraqi delegate to the League of Nations, an attempt was made to inculcate Muzahim Beg Al Pachachi, who, despite his acquittal in 1932, is commonly believed to have been responsible for similar attacks on King Feisal some years ago. I understand, however, that Muzahim Beg has satisfactorily cleared himself of any connexion with the present affair.

I have, &c.

G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

[E 6376/1/93]

No. 75.

Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received October 16.)

(No. 599.)

Sir,

Bagdad, October 11, 1934.

WITH reference to Geneva telegram No. 62, Saving, of the 28th September, I have the honour to report that the Iraqi Government have now decided as to the disposal of the Assyrian refugees who are still in the Mosul Camp, and of the families at present destitute in Mosul who may apply for assistance (estimated at 200).

2. According to the latest figures, there are in the camp:—

(A) Without supporters	...	...	306
(B) Aged and infirm	...	...	100

This total of 406 men, women and children will be retained in the camp for a further eight to nine months at an estimated cost of 2,420 I.D.

There are also—

(C) Those who have menfolk in the camp	...	39
(D) Those who have male supporters in Iraq	...	210

3. These two latter categories will be sent away, each woman and child receiving 4 I.D. and 2 I.D. respectively. Attached to categories (C) and (D) are eighteen and four men respectively. They will receive nothing.

4. The total cost of thus providing for categories (C) and (D) is estimated at 696 I.D., making a total of 3,116 I.D. for the Assyrians in the Mosul Camp.

5. Both Major Thomson and Sir Kinahan Cornwallis are of opinion that the eviction of categories (C) and (D) on the above terms is not unreasonable.

6. For the 200 families in Mosul who may apply for assistance, 7 I.D. have been allocated per family for purchase of seeds, oxen and ploughs, 1,500 I.D. per family for repairs to houses and 150 I.D. for transport. Total, 1,850 I.D. Grand total for present Assyrian relief, 4,966 I.D.

7. As soon as these arrangements have been carried out, Major Thomson proposes to return to the United Kingdom. He has added that his services will be available later on, if required for the British Guiana scheme.

I have, &c.

GEORGE OGILVIE-FORBES.

[E 6561/1/93]

No. 76.

Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received October 26.)

(No. 37. Saving.)

(Telegraphic.) *En clair*.

Bagdad, October 22, 1934.

MY despatch No. 599.

Sir Kinahan Cornwallis informs me that Major Thomson is meeting with considerable opposition from the Assyrians of categories C and D whom the Iraqi Government and their above-mentioned advisers desire to remove from the Mosul refugee camp with the gratuity indicated.

It was found necessary last week to arrest the men of category C. After a few hours in prison they agreed to remove their families from the camp.

But category D, who are all women, are becoming truculent. They at first demanded a written undertaking that the gratuity was a free gift, that they would not be forced to go to the country villages, and that their acceptance of the gratuity and eviction would be no obstacle to their leaving Iraq if an opportunity offered. To this Major Thomson and the Iraqi authorities agreed.

Apparently the women are still obstructive, and Sir K. Cornwallis informs me that, unless they leave on 23rd October, their rations will be stopped and on 25th October their tents will be taken down.

Cornwallis, who with Thomson apparently feels rather strongly about what he considers a defiance of the Iraqi Government, tells me that he does not anticipate any unfortunate incident as a result of this somewhat drastic action.

[E 6716/6495/93]

No. 77.

Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received November 5.)

(No. 618.)

Sir,

Bagdad, October 24, 1934.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 184 of the 20th October, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a copy of a note which I have addressed to the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject of the alleged confiscation of the *Jewish Chronicle* by the Iraqi postal authorities.

2. According to *Al-Alam-al-Arabi*, a local paper published in Arabic, an article from a Bagdad correspondent recently appeared in the *Jewish Chronicle* under the signature "One in a Thousand," in which the writer complained of the dismissal during the last two years of seventy Jewish officials from the service of the Iraqi Ministry of Economics and Communications. The editor of *Al-Alam-al-Arabi*, a local Christian, is well known for his anti-Jewish sentiments, and is always ready to make more than full use of any opportunity to attack the Jewish press. But, if the *Jewish Chronicle* has in fact been confiscated, it is likely that this is due to the publication in it of some article of the nature described above.

3. The attitude of the Iraqi authorities reported in my despatch No. 593 of the 10th October has been reflected not only in *Al-Alam-al-Arabi*, but in the local press as a whole. The action taken by the Government against "Zionist and other foreign newspapers," is loudly applauded; Zionists are represented as indulging in an orgy of anti-Iraqi propaganda owing to their alarm at the

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recrudescence in Iraq of Arab national feeling, which has lain dormant since the death of King Feisal; and, in order to show that it is the Zionists alone who are responsible for this propaganda and are conducting it from ulterior motives, a number of articles by Iraqi Jews are being published, in which the Zionist or "renegade Jews" are execrated and the Iraqi Government praised for their generosity and their good treatment of the genuine Iraqi Jew. This is a well-known gambit of the Iraqis, and recalls the methods which they have always used for refuting criticisms of their treatment of the Assyrians.

4. Much of the venom of this attack has been directed against one Mr. E. Levy (or Lawi, as his name is written in Bagdad), an Iraqi Jew of Persian origin and owner of a bookshop in the main street of Bagdad, whose name appeared under a letter which was published in the *Manchester Guardian* of the 2nd October, to which I would refer you. Mr. Lawi was unwise to sign with his own name a letter which commences by describing Iraq, however justifiably, as an "intellectual prison," and he is now paying the penalty for his rashness. Some days ago he was arrested, and I understand that he has been detained and is still being interrogated under section 13 of Chapter XII of the Bagdad Penal Code, according to which "whoever, by any means of publication mentioned in section 78 [this covers newspaper articles], insults or seeks to bring into contempt the Government or the army shall be punished with imprisonment for a period not exceeding three years, and with fine, or with only one of these penalties."

5. I do not consider that there are any grounds on which I can intervene on Mr. E. Lawi's behalf, since he is an Iraqi subject, and his somewhat violent article does in fact appear to render him liable to penalties under the above-quoted article of the Penal Code. But I have thought it worth while to report his case to you as an indication of local feeling.

6. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's High Commissioner for Palestine.

I have, &c.

GEORGE OGILVIE-FORBES.

Enclosure in No. 77.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs.*

Your Excellency,

Bagdad, October 24, 1934.

THE *Jewish Chronicle*, a newspaper of high standing, published in London, has represented to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that the agents for its distribution in Iraq have cancelled their orders on the ground that the paper has been confiscated by the Iraqi postal authorities.

2. I have been directed to request your Excellency to be so good as to make enquiries into this matter and to inform me whether the *Jewish Chronicle* has in fact been confiscated or banned in this country and, if so, for what reasons.

I avail, &c.

G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

[E 6790/1/93]

No. 78.

*The Officer Administering the Government of British Guiana to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.—(Communicated to Foreign Office, November 7.)*

(Confidential.)

Government House,

Sir,

British Guiana, October 4, 1934.

WITH reference to previous telegraphic correspondence on the subject of the possibility of settling Assyrians in the Rupununi district of this Colony, I have the honour to enclose a copy of a message which I addressed to the members of the Legislative Council on the 21st September, a copy of the resolution which was adopted by the Council, and a copy of the official report of the debate on the motion.<sup>(1)</sup>

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

2. All the elected nominated unofficial members who were present and spoke were in favour of the investigation into the possibilities and suitability of the Rupununi district for the settlement suggested. They also considered, if it was finally decided to settle the Assyrians in this Colony, that, as the Colony had for many years wanted population, it should be to the Colony's benefit. Members, however, pointed out many of the difficulties which will attend the bringing of these people to the Colony, transporting them to the Rupununi district and settling them there. No new points of any importance were raised in the debate, but I invite attention to the remarks by Mr. T. T. Smellie, who has very considerable experience of equipping expeditions to the interior for the purpose of collecting balata, and I am inclined to agree with him that it may take the best part of a year to arrange the transportation details. I think, however, that this should not prevent the sending of an advance party as early as may be convenient next year.

Two or three members reverted to the suggestion made some years ago that the salvation of this Colony depended upon a railway being built into the interior. Other members disagreed with them, and I think this suggestion need not be considered seriously, as the advance in motor vehicle transportation has developed so greatly within recent years, and continues to develop, that, provided a suitable road to the area in question is constructed, there should be no necessity for a railway, at all events for many years to come.

3. It can be regarded, I submit, that the proposal that this project should be examined has received the unanimous support of the majority of the people of the Colony who are capable of expressing an opinion, and I think that it will be a matter for disappointment should it finally be decided that the Rupununi district is unsuitable.

4. I also enclose copies of the memorandum of agreement entered into with the Rupununi Company by Francis Dias on behalf of Government for an option to purchase all the company's assets in the Rupununi district. An option has been obtained for seven months from the date of the memorandum at a cost of 500 dollars, and the purchase price agreed upon for these assets is 168,000 dollars. To the memorandum of agreement is attached a note signed by Mr. Dias stating that he has no interest in the matter and that he was acting solely on behalf of the Government of the Colony.

5. I questioned Mr. Dias as to what he considered his fees should be for undertaking these negotiations, and he stated that he did not wish to charge Government anything. I do not think, however, that you would wish this Government to be beholden in any way to Mr. Dias, and I think that he should be asked to render his account for the services he has rendered, and I shall be glad if you will approve of his being paid. According to the prescribed fees the account should not exceed £100. I cannot emphasise too strongly the great assistance Mr. Dias has been to me in these intricate negotiations.

6. I shall await with interest further communications from you in regard to this matter, and I am hoping to have as much information as is available collected in a precise form for examination by the commission appointed by the League of Nations to investigate the suitability of the area suggested for settlement by the Assyrians.

I have, &c.

C. DOUGLAS JONES.

Enclosure 1 in No. 78.

*Message addressed to Members of the Legislative Council, September 20, 1934.*

Honourable Members of the Legislative Council,

I HAVE the honour to inform Council that I have received from the Secretary of State a despatch enquiring as to the possibility of settling in British Guiana certain Assyrians at present living in Iraq (Mesopotamia).

2. The necessity of resettling these people has arisen in the following manner: The Assyrians are a Christian community in a Moslem country. Some of them are Presbyterians, but, generally speaking, they belong to that branch of the Assyro-Chaldean race which constitutes the Nestorian Church. Before the

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war they lived for the most part in the highlands of Turkish Kurdistan. When Turkey entered the war, they were in a difficult position, and eventually they took up arms against Turkey in co-operation with Russia. On the collapse of the Russian forces, they were obliged to retire fighting through Persia, and eventually, with the assistance of a British force, they found refuge with their families in Iraq, where they were kept for a considerable time in refugee camps at the expense of His Majesty's Government. Attempts were made after cessation of hostilities to repatriate them to their homeland, but those who returned were eventually again driven out by the Turks. An effort was then made by His Majesty's Government to secure in the peace settlement with Turkey that the Turco-Iraq frontier should be so drawn as to include within Iraq the old homelands of the Assyrians, but it was found impossible to obtain acceptance of this by the Turks. The present frontier, as drawn by the League Council, to which the final settlement was left, leaves the former Assyrian homes in Turkey. Consequently, the task had to be faced of settling the Assyrians in Iraq. It was a task of extreme delicacy, not only on account of racial and religious difficulties, but also because the necessary land to settle the Assyrians in a compact community as they themselves would have preferred could not be made available without creating a serious political problem. Considerable progress was, however, made with settling the Assyrians in various parts of Northern Iraq, and employment was found for them in an increasing degree in the Iraq Levies, a British military auxiliary force. But as the time approached for the termination of the mandatory régime in Iraq, the Assyrians became apprehensive about their future position in the country, and made it clear that unless this could be safeguarded by settlement in a compact and organised community, they would prefer to leave Iraq for some other country. They petitioned the League of Nations in this sense and the position was considered by the Council of the League of Nations in December 1932. The upshot was that the Council approved of a further attempt being made by the Iraqi Government to settle the landless Assyrians under suitable conditions, leaving the question of settlement outside Iraq for subsequent consideration, should the attempt be unsuccessful. Unfortunately, mainly owing to local political and religious difficulties inherent in the situation in Iraq, the attempt was unsuccessful, and only resulted in increasing friction, which, in August 1933, culminated in disorders, in which the Assyrians suffered serious losses to life and property. In consequence of this, the matter came once more before the Council of the League, who decided in October last that the only practical course was to facilitate the emigration to some other country of those Assyrians who desired to leave Iraq.

3. Investigations as to the possible destination began at once, and for some time it was hoped settlement might be effected in Brazil on property of a British company, Paraná Plantations (Limited). Unhappily, when negotiations were reaching a head, the Brazilian Constituent Assembly adopted a measure restricting immigration from foreign countries in general, in a manner which made it impossible to proceed with the scheme.

4. Owing to the unfavourable economic and social conditions prevailing generally throughout the world at the present time, it is a matter of great difficulty to find a suitable alternative. The Assyrian problem, however, both on humanitarian and on political grounds, urgently demands a solution. His Majesty's Government are most anxious to facilitate such a solution if practicable, and have made enquiries in several Colonies, including British Guiana.

5. It has been suggested that the savannah country of the Rupununi district is deserving of special consideration in this connexion, as sufficient suitable areas of Crown lands could be made available on which the Assyrians could be settled as a self-supporting community. I have caused a careful investigation to be made into this matter, and have laid it before my Executive Council.

6. From the point of view of development and colonisation, it seems likely that the Assyrians would be an asset to the Colony, as they are reputed to possess many qualities which mark them out as potentially successful settlers. They are not nomads. Neither are they town dwellers, but are an industrious and hardy people, accustomed to simple conditions of life. Owing to a similarity of name, there is often a tendency to confuse the Assyrians with the Syrians, but, in fact, they are quite different in origin, as well as in habits, mentality and occupation from the Syrian traders to be found in many British colonies. The Assyrians

are occupied mainly in pastoral and agricultural pursuits, though their numbers include also craftsmen whose trades are essential to self-supporting village life. Very many of them have served, and some are still serving, as soldiers in the Iraq Levies, and numerous British officers who have commanded them in the Levies have always spoken of their courage, discipline and loyalty in the highest terms.

7. The total number of Assyrians in Iraq is estimated at 20,000, and it is difficult to estimate precisely the proportion of this number who will, when the time comes, wish to leave Iraq. The Committee of the Council of the League, in dealing with this matter, has hitherto proceeded on the assumption that a minimum of 10,000 will have to be provided for.

8. The Secretary of State has intimated that, if settlement of the Assyrians in British Guiana is proceeded with, this Government would in no circumstances be required to undertake any financial liability in the matter until such time as the new community was fully established and in a position to take its share as an integral part of the population of the Colony by making its due contribution to general revenue. The cost of settlement would, therefore, be met from external sources, though it is impossible to indicate at present the manner in which the scheme would be financed as the whole question is in the hands of the League of Nations.

9. The probable effect on the local labour market has been considered, and it is not anticipated that the influx of Assyrians would have any adverse effect on the employment statistics of the people of this Colony.

10. If the possibilities of settlement in British Guiana are placed before the Council of the League of Nations, the Council will no doubt think that it is necessary that investigation should, in the first place, be made on the spot by a League Commission, composed of persons familiar with the requirements of the Assyrians, to report whether, having regard more particularly to the health and agricultural conditions, the Assyrians can be expected to thrive in the area in question, and whether the proposed scheme of settlement would afford a satisfactory solution of the problem. Such a report would, no doubt, be necessary to satisfy both the Council of the League of Nations and the Assyrians themselves, whose emigration from Iraq is to be absolutely voluntary, and whom it would, therefore, be necessary to satisfy that they would have a reasonable prospect of successful settlement in congenial conditions, since there can be no question of repatriation to Iraq.

11. It is desirable, if the scheme is approved, that the first batch of settlers should leave Iraq as early as possible in 1935.

12. My Executive Council is unanimously in favour of His Majesty's Government informing the League of Nations that there is land available in British Guiana which appears, *prima facie*, to be suitable for settlement by the Assyrians, and considers that the Government should co-operate in carrying such settlement into effect if it is decided to proceed with the project.

13. In the message I have outlined the broad aspects of the scheme only. There are certain details of an administrative nature which will, of necessity, have to be left to this Government. I invite Council to approve of a resolution being transmitted to the Secretary of State in the sense indicated in paragraph 12 above.

C. DOUGLAS JONES,  
Officer Administering the Government.

Government House,  
British Guiana, September 20, 1934.

Enclosure 2 in No. 78.

Resolution adopted by the Legislative Council, September 21, 1934.

THAT, with reference to the Officer Administering the Government's Message No. 15 of the 20th September, 1934, this Council approves of the proposal that His Majesty's Government should inform the League of Nations that there is land available in the Colony of British Guiana which appears *prima facie* to be suitable for settlement by Assyrians and is of the opinion that as settlers these



people would be welcome by the inhabitants of the Colony, and agrees that the Government of British Guiana should co-operate in carrying such settlement into effect if it is decided to proceed with the project.

Passed by the Legislative Council this 21st day of September, 1934.

C. W. H. COLLIER,  
*Clerk of the Council.*

Enclosure 3 in No. 78.

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT made at Georgetown in the County of Demerara and Colony of British Guiana this 20th day of September, 1934, between the Rupununi Development Company (Limited), whose registered office is situate at lot 16, Water Street, Georgetown, aforesaid (hereinafter called "the Company"), of the one part, and the Honourable Francis Dias, O.B.E., of Georgetown, Solicitor, as agent for principals hereafter to be named to the Company (which agent, together with his principals and their or either of their executors, administrators or assigns are hereinafter called "the Applicant"), of the other part.

WHEREBY it is agreed between the parties as follows:—

1. In consideration of the sum of \$500 (five hundred dollars) paid by the applicant to the Company the applicant shall have the option to purchase and acquire from the Company the property, assets and effects more particularly described in the First Schedule hereto free from all encumbrances at the price of \$168,000 (one hundred and sixty-eight thousand dollars).

2. The option may only be exercised by the applicant at any time before the 20th day of April, 1935, giving or sending by registered letter to the Company's Solicitors, Messrs. Cameron and Shepherd, at their office in Georgetown, notice in writing that the applicant exercises the option. Time is of the essence of this clause.

3. If the option is exercised as above-mentioned the applicant shall thereupon become the purchaser of the said hereditaments upon the terms set out in the Second Schedule hereto.

4. In the First Schedule are set out the leases, licences of occupancy and freehold hereditaments owned or occupied by the Company under various titles and the cancellation by the Crown of any part of such properties during the term of this option shall not annul the sale, but if such cancellation shall affect more than 5 per cent. of the value of any of the Company's said holdings of land the same shall be a matter for deduction from the said price, the amount to be deducted to be agreed or submitted to arbitration under clause 9 hereof; on the other hand capital expenditure by the Company on upkeep or maintenance during the option period shall not enhance the price unless concurred in by the applicant.

5. Provided always that nothing herein contained shall cause a contract for sale and purchase to exist between the parties hereto before the exercise of the option so as to give the applicant any right to interfere in the management of the said properties, assets and effects; provided always that the Company may at its discretion or at the discretion of the Board of Directors carry on business in all respects as heretofore during the term of this option and in particular may sell or remove its cattle in the ordinary course of business as heretofore and may barter, sell, exchange or remove any horses, mules, draft cattle or other animals on the said properties which shall not be a cause for any abatement in the purchase price unless it exceeds 5 per cent. loss on the total animals of the class referred to on the Company's properties.

6. In case the option is exercised the said consideration money of \$500 shall be treated as in part payment of the deposit under the contract the same being increased to 10 per cent. on the purchase money, and the said deposit as well as the balance of the purchase money if paid in advance of transfer of the property as provided for in the Second Schedule hereto shall be paid to the Solicitors for the Company, who will hold it as stakeholders for both parties until the said transfers be completed.

7. If the option is not exercised the said consideration money shall belong to the Company.

8. In the event of the option being exercised the rentals to the Crown on the said grants, licences and other land holdings shall be apportioned as on the 31st day of December, 1934, to which date they shall be paid by the Company. The profits (if any after allowing for outgoings connected therewith) from cattle and other produce if any removed from the ranch between that date and the actual completion shall be for applicant's account; the Company shall bear and pay the standing outgoings (salary of manager and employees on the ranch) estimated at \$500 a month down to the said 20th day of April, 1935.

9. Any matter to be referred to arbitration hereunder unless the parties shall agree upon a single arbitrator shall be referred to the arbitration of two persons or their umpire and the Arbitration Ordinance, chapter 24, shall apply.

10. The cattle on the ranch at the last tallying numbered 47,456 and the horses 1,282, but the sale is of the horses and cattle on the ranch, say, 46,000 cattle and 1,282 horses, more or less.

FIRST SCHEDULE.

*The Property to be comprised in the Sale.*—The whole of the property and effects of The Rupununi Development Company (Limited) in the Rupununi District of British Guiana, including the holdings, particulars of which are hereunder written, and all the buildings and erections thereon belonging to the Company and all cattle, horses, mules and other live and dead stock thereon with all fencing and corrals.

Nature of Holdings.	Particulars.		Period.	Area.
	Dates	Acquired.		
Lease A. 1972	...	1.1.1920	99 years	1,972 sq. miles.
Lease A. 1830	...	1.1.1919	99 years	190 sq. miles.
G.P. No. 59	...	10.1.1924	Renewable annually	50 sq. miles.
G.P. No. 60	...	10.1.1924	Do.	50 sq. miles.
G.P. No. 61	...	10.1.1924	Do.	50 sq. miles.
G.P. No. 62	...	10.1.1924	Do.	50 sq. miles.
G.P. No. 63	...	10.1.1924	Do.	50 sq. miles.
G.P. No. 64	...	10.1.1924	Do.	50 sq. miles.
G.P. No. 65	...	10.1.1924	Do.	50 sq. miles.
G.P. No. 100	...	6.6.1931	Do.	50 sq. miles.

SECOND SCHEDULE.

*Terms for Completion of Sale.*—The Company will, within 14 days of the exercise of the option, deliver to the applicant such further and additional particulars to those in the First Schedule as may be required by the applicant and as the Company has of all the said holdings and property and the applicant shall make such enquiries and inspections as may be necessary within 30 days after such delivery and any requisitions or enquiries not made by that date shall be deemed waived time being of the essence of the contract in this respect and the purchase shall be completed by executing transfer at the Lands and Mines Department within 14 days thereafter when the balance of the purchase price less any agreed or arbitrated abatement shall be paid and the transfers handed over for registration. Provided that the applicant shall have the right, either at the time of exercising the option, or at any time thereafter and before the transfer and registration of the leases, concessions and other title deeds mentioned in this Schedule are perfected, to pay the full purchase price for the property hereby agreed to be sold, and to have immediate delivery thereof made to him without in any way affecting the obligation of the Company to complete the transfer and registration of the said leases, concessions and other title deeds as stated herein. Any property requiring to be transported shall be dealt with if necessary after the said transfers shall have been effected the Company and applicant agreeing to use all diligence to obtain and pass the said transports. If required by the applicant the sum of \$1,000 may be deducted from the said consideration money as earnest which shall be paid over on passing of the said transports. Each party



will bear and pay its own costs of preparing and passing the said transfers and transports but all Government fees and stamps thereon shall be paid by the applicant and the Company in equal shares.

In witness whereof the applicant has hereunto set his hand and the Company have caused their Common Seal to be affixed the day and year first before written.

The Common Seal of the Rupununi Development Company (Limited) was hereunto affixed in the presence of

GEORGE R. REID }  
ANDREW M. FULTON } *Directors.*  
O. H. FISHER, *Secretary.*

WITNESSES:

1. VIVIAN C. DIAS.
2. F. I. DIAS.

(Seal.)  
Seal affixed by me.  
(Sgd.) O. H. FISHER,  
*Secretary.*

(Sgd.) FRANCIS DIAS.

DECLARATION BY MR. FRANCIS DIAS.

September 19, 1934.

I hereby declare that the Memorandum of Agreement for an option to purchase the assets and effects of the Rupununi Development Company (Limited), in the Rupununi district in the Colony (a copy of which is hereto attached and marked A), will be signed by me on the 20th September, 1934, for and on behalf of the Government of British Guiana, and I further declare that I have no interest whatsoever in any matter or thing contained in the said Agreement.

Georgetown,  
British Guiana.

(Sgd.) FRANCIS DIAS.

[E 6837/6837/93]

No. 79.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received November 12.)*

(No. 629.)

Sir,

Bagdad, October 26, 1934.

WITH the events described in my despatch No. 415 of the 28th June, 1933, organised resistance to the Government by the followers of Sheikh of Barzan came to an end. Sheikh Ahmed himself returned to Iraq and has since been required to live in one of the chief towns of this country. But he is evidently on friendly, perhaps even too friendly, terms with the authorities and is usually a conspicuous figure at such functions as the celebrations held on the occasion of the anniversary of the accession of King Ghazi.

2. The Iraqi Government have not, however, yet succeeded in establishing complete security in the Barzan district. In paragraph 3 of his despatch No. 55 of the 25th January, 1933, Sir Francis Humphrys mentioned Khalil Khoshawi as having been excluded from the general amnesty which the Iraqi Government were prepared to extend to the rebels under certain circumstances. This man has been a thorn in the flesh of the local authorities throughout the year and has conducted several raids on police posts with the object of securing rifles and ammunition. He has been responsible for the death of a number of policemen and also of an inspector of the Public Works Department, who had been sent to report on the possibility of restoring a bridge on the Mergasor road, the main line of communication with the Barzan district in the winter.

3. Khalil Khoshawi's base is stated to be in the neighbourhood of the Turkish village of Berokh. The Turkish authorities are making no attempt to take measures against him or to curtail his activities; but, in the opinion of Sir Kinahan Cornwallis, this is probably due, not to any ill-will on the part

of the Turkish Government, but to the fact that the local Turkish authorities on the frontier have an agreement with Khalil Khoshawi whereby they receive a share of any loot obtained in Iraq.

4. Khalil Khoshawi's present following consists of a band of about forty Kurdish criminals. Sir Kinahan Cornwallis does not consider that this number will increase or that the more law-abiding Kurds will be unsettled, unless this bandit happens to win some outstanding success. The situation need not, therefore, be regarded as serious at present. But it reflects sadly on the ability of the Iraqi to establish really secure administration in the mountainous districts in the north. It is an unfortunate fact that the Iraqi personnel of the much-vaunted Iraqi air force confine themselves to displaying their skill over and around the city of Bagdad and never venture over the northern mountains. I understand, for example, that not a single aeroplane piloted by an Iraqi has visited the Diana landing-ground this year.

5. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Angora.

I have, &c.  
G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

[E 6839/14/93]

No. 80.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received November 12.)*

(No. 631.)

Sir,

Bagdad, October 27, 1934.

I HAVE the honour to submit the following brief report upon the financial operations of the Iraqi railways for the year which ended on the 31st March, 1934. The report for the preceding financial year is contained in my despatch No. 537 of the 19th August, 1933:—

2. The undernoted classified statements of receipts and expenditure for the year accompany this despatch:—

- (a) The revenue account, which gives full details of the receipts and expenditure during the year,<sup>(1)</sup> and
- (b) The net revenue account, which disposes of sundry receipts and expenditure which are not the direct result of railway working.<sup>(1)</sup>

In support of these is an account of capital appropriations and a balance sheet of the whole railway system as at the 31st March, 1934.<sup>(1)</sup> The figures given in the accounts are in Iraqi dinars, but can equally be read as representing pounds sterling.

3. Revenue receipts during the year amounted to I.D. 524,037, as compared with the figure of I.D. 493,500 shown in the sanctioned estimates, an improvement of I.D. 30,537. The normal expenditure during the year totalled I.D. 491,985, an excess of I.D. 2,235 over the sanctioned estimate of I.D. 489,750.

4. The revenue surplus on the whole year was I.D. 32,051, which is a substantial and welcome improvement on the estimated surplus of I.D. 3,750. This result has been achieved after full provision has been made for depreciation and renewal charges.

5. The volume of traffic during the year was greater than had been anticipated. Third-class passenger traffic, encouraged by the reductions in fares, again substantially increased, 337,000 more tickets being issued during the year than during the previous year. Upper-class receipts continued to diminish despite experiments in the way of reduced fares. The large surplus has, however, been derived almost entirely from the carriage of imported goods. The movement of grain failed almost completely as a source of freight revenue and the quantity moved during the year was the lowest on record. The quantities of other local produce moved were also very low and had there not been a heavy flow of imported goods the revenue picture would have been a gloomy one.

6. Two main factors contributed to the heavy volume of general imports carried by the railways. Persian transit trade revived temporarily because of the

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.



strained nature of Russo-Persian trade relations, although it is to be feared that this improvement is transient. The transfer of oil by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company from Southern to Northern Persia through Iraq proved to be lucrative traffic, and no less than 38,000 tons of oil were so moved, for which the company paid the railways I.D. 53,379 in freight and other charges. A further large quantity of pipe-line materials was carried for the Iraq Petroleum Company. As in preceding years, therefore, the profit made by the railways is attributable to good fortune in obtaining a heavy volume of traffic of a special and temporary nature.

7. Although the volume of superior passenger traffic in Iraq is steadily diminishing, there was a considerable increase in the receipts and the profits derived from the Iraqi portion of the Simplon Orient Express Service. This result was also achieved by reducing the scale of charges, which had ceased to be attractive since the fall in value of sterling.

8. The net balance of surplus revenue, which is brought up to the sum of I.D. 34,876 by the addition of revenue derived from operations not directly the result of railway working, as shown in the "Net Revenue Account," has been allocated entirely to the reserve account.

9. Full provision for depreciation has been charged in the accounts under the heading of "Renewals, Replacements and Betterments," and a sum of I.D. 72,763 was transferred to that fund during the year. The actual expenditure during the year from the fund was I.D. 23,361.

10. The cost of capital works during the year was restricted to a net amount of I.D. 296, of which I.D. 237 was spent upon the construction of a rest-house at Uglat on the Nisibin route. Some details of this work are given in paragraph 2 (a) of my despatch No. 518 of the 10th August, 1933, and the expenditure was authorised in your despatch No. 578 of the 14th September, 1933. The small balance remaining represents the additional amount paid for a plot of land in the circumstances described in my despatch No. 91 dated the 13th February, 1934, less a small amount recovered on land account in another connexion. The expenditure on capital account has, as is customary, been met by the transfer from reserve of an equal amount.

11. The capital account shows a debit balance of I.D. 27,668, which is the same as at the end of the previous financial year. The balance is being left over for adjustment when the balance sheet is recast on the formation of the Railway Corporation.

12. Two accounts adjustments call for special mention in connexion with the main balance sheet:—

(a) A sum of I.D. 47,828 has been shown in previous balance sheets as a credit suspense item representing the value of serviceable railway material recovered from the Baiji-Shergat section of the line when that portion was dismantled. The purpose of creating a special suspense item for this credit was that the material and the credit would be available for use when the projected Kirkuk-Mosul extension was put in hand. This project shows no signs of materialising in the near future and there is no reason for maintaining the credit as a separate item. It has therefore been absorbed into the general reserve account.

(b) The amount to the credit of the reserve account has been reduced by a sum of I.D. 47,678 on account of obsolescence of stores on hand. This is due to the fact that on the transfer of the railway from military to civil control a large quantity of stores was taken over at a valuation far in excess of their market worth to-day, and many of them were of a standard which would not be acceptable as first-class stores now. A committee of railway officers examined these stores with the object of revaluing them so that the prices at which they are carried in the stores account should bear a closer resemblance to their true value. The committee recommended that the stores should be written down to the extent of I.D. 47,678, and, as the obsolescence has occurred over a period of years, this amount has, pending the sanction of the Iraqi Government, been charged against the reserve built up from revenue surplusage.

The adjustments at (a) and (b) practically cancel one another out as far as the figure of general reserve is concerned.

13. The railways were in an even better financial position on the 1st April, 1934, than they were a year earlier. The balance sheet, although it takes no account of the capital outlay on the system or of the present value of the assets, shows that the railways are more than solvent. There is a liquid reserve fund of I.D. 71,293, and the fund for renewals is in credit to the extent of I.D. 190,996. Full provision has been made for the balance on the liquidation account due to His Majesty's Government of I.D. 185,820, which is due to be capitalised under the Railway Corporation proposals and constitutes a hidden reserve. Cash balances are substantial and total I.D. 285,804, while the value of stores on hand, written down as described above, is I.D. 131,375. Despite the peculiar administrative difficulties under which the Directorate labours in controlling, as a quasi-Government Department, a system which is the property of another Government, and the severe financial restrictions imposed by having no funds available for capital developments other than by the appropriation of fortuitous revenue surpluses, the railways can still be considered as a valuable Imperial asset.

14. I am sending a copy of this despatch (without enclosures) to the Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &c.

G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

[E 6695/1/93]

No. 81.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received November 2.)*

(No. 636.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, October 29, 1934.*

IN reply to your despatch No. 717 of the 18th October, I am informed that the Iraqi Government, in addition to granting a gratuity of 4 dinars to each woman and 2 dinars to each child in Category C (the estimated cost of maintenance for one year), are prepared to settle these people in the villages with a grant of 7 dinars per family for the purchase of seeds, oxen and ploughs and 1½ dinars per family for repairs to houses. They are apparently included in the 200 families in Mosul referred to in paragraph 6 of my despatch No. 599. Whether these people will be willing to accept these terms is another question. The Minister for Foreign Affairs recently, with some warmth, expressed the opinion that Categories C and D were very fortunate in receiving such assistance, as there are many other Assyrians in equally straitened circumstances who receive no help whatever, not to mention other Iraqis. The present Iraqi Government quite realised their obligations towards Categories A and B, but objected to Categories C and D being singled out for indefinite and gratuitous maintenance, especially as there were so many others in an equivalent or worse plight.

2. As soon as Nuri Pasha returns from the army manoeuvres, I shall take a suitable opportunity of impressing on him the misgivings likely to be aroused by the Iraqi communication to the League of the 8th October and shall endeavour to persuade him to supplement it in the sense you desire. Sir Kinahan Cornwallis informs me that it is unfortunately translated and that it is the intention to maintain the camp for a brief period, not for Assyrian refugees "without means of support," but for Assyrian refugees "without supporters," an entirely different interpretation.

3. I understand that Major Thomson intends to leave Mosul on the 4th November. He considers that there is not sufficient work for him there, and that his duties can be adequately performed by Major Wilson or by the clerk of the refugee camp. He also desires, no doubt for private reasons, to return to the United Kingdom. While he is therefore resigning his appointment, I understand that he is willing to place his services again at the disposal of the Iraqi Government if, and when, they invite him to do so.

4. I enclose for your information copy of a letter dated the 20th October which I have received from His Majesty's acting consul in Mosul regarding the difficulties being experienced by Major Thomson in disposing of Categories C and D.

I have, &c.

GEORGE OGILVIE-FORBES.



Enclosure in No. 81.

*Acting Consul Finch to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes.*

Dear Ogilvie-Forbes,

Mosul, October 20, 1934.

THOMSON, as I dare say you know, is soon leaving, and is thoroughly fed up with the Assyrians, who have been giving him and Wilson a great deal of trouble in the camp this last week.

2. Roughly, the situation is that 1,420 were successfully transported to Syria in September, and Duprez, who corresponds to A.I. at Hassetchi, has promised to take up sympathetically with his superiors the question of accepting 38 more persons related to the Syrian emigrants, who turned up here too late for the move. A week ago there were 18 men in the camp capable of earning a living, with their dependants, totalling (inclusive of the 18) 54 persons; in Mosul town were about 70 men, whose wives and dependants, to the number of about 200, were in the camp. These two categories, by Government order, were to be cleared out of the camp, each woman receiving £4 and each child £2 as a parting gift, and they were to be told that, if they wished to go to the villages, assistance in kind over and above these sums would be granted.

3. These proposals met with categorical refusal by the Assyrians. On the 13th October two of the men in the town were put in the lock-up for refusal to obey a Government order to remove their families from the camp, but have since been released without settlement of the question. On the 15th the 18 men in the camp refused to go and were marched off to the gaol; after a great deal of palaver, and much demonstration by the women, they consented to take their families away, but one and all refused to touch the "blood money," as they called it. I happened to go into the camp while all this was going on, in order to catch Wilson on a matter unconcerned with Assyrians, and was very soon approached by women, who threw head-dresses before my feet, &c.; so I hastily cleared out, not to cause complications. But nobody came to this consulate with any petition, though the French consul was approached, and I believe somebody went to the Persian, though I have not verified this.

4. So the men in the camp have taken out their families, but those in the town have refused to remove their dependants in the camp. I understand that these latter are to be struck off the ration strength as from this coming week.

5. The question of the money grant has occupied much time in the intervening days. Qasha Yokhanna came to Thomson, saying that he had been deputed to ask for a guarantee that the acceptance of it (a) would not oblige the recipients to return to the villages; (b) would not stop them eventually leaving Iraq; (c) would not be treated as a loan. Thomson forthwith wrote out a guarantee to that effect. Then the Qasha came back and said they refused to listen to him or let him represent them. The men were then approached directly, and said that they would take the money, but would not sign any receipt, because if they did they wouldn't be able to leave the country. And so it goes on. "She's in that state of mind," said the White Queen, "that she wants to deny something—only she doesn't know what to deny!"

6. The idea that seems to be generally about is that Thomson is trying to force the people against their will into the villages, and I hear that Mar Shimun has just said this at Geneva. Anyhow, poor Thomson is thoroughly discouraged.

7. I hear that those in the villages are preparing to cultivate a great deal more than last year.

8. There has still been no curiosity about British Guiana. I have a feeling that they don't really believe anything is ever going to be done to move them. If that induces them to sit quiet until something definite is decided one way or the other, it won't do any harm. But I still think that, if they don't leave this country, there is going to be recurrence at some time of the trouble.

Yours sincerely,

J. P. G. FINCH.

[E 7085/1/93]

No. 82.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received November 26.)*

(No. 663.)

Sir,

Bagdad, November 14, 1934.

IN continuation of Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes's despatch No. 636 of the 29th October, 1934, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of Major Thomson's report to the Minister of the Interior, on the closing of that portion of the Mosul camp for Assyrians which contained persons classified in categories "C" and "D."

2. Major Thomson's narrative ends with a summary of the decision taken by the mutessarif in regard to those who refused to leave the camp. To this decision he subsequently gave effect and on the 25th October the 250 (approximately) persons belonging to categories "C" and "D" were compelled to leave. They thereupon moved to an empty space close to the French consulate, where they camped in the open. The mutessarif considered it undesirable for many reasons that they should remain there, and gave orders that they should be persuaded to disperse. He could, of course, have used force, but refrained. He offered to hire houses for them, but they refused. On the 7th November all but fifty persons had found accommodation for themselves in the town, and the remainder had been ordered to disperse on the 8th November.

3. Up to that time only five persons had accepted the money offered by the Government (see paragraph 3 of Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes's despatch No. 599 of the 11th October), and the mutessarif had announced that the offer would not remain open after the 14th November.

4. There is now a movement amongst persons in categories "A" and "B" (those without male supporters) to leave the camp. Twelve have already done so, each woman receiving 8 I.D. and each child 4 I.D. on departure.

5. Agricultural assistance (see paragraph 6 of Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes's despatch No. 599 of the 11th October) has been granted to twenty families, who have returned to their villages from Mosul, and Major Wilson now anticipates that as many as 250 families may apply for and receive assistance of this kind.

6. Sir Kinahan Cornwallis informs me that the French authorities at Hassacha have intimated to the Iraqi Government their willingness to receive ninety-three more men, women and children now living in Mosul and Bagdad, who are related to the Assyrians in Syria. The Iraqi Government have gladly accepted this offer and arrangements are being made to collect and transport these people to Syria.

I have, &amp;c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

Enclosure in No. 82.

*Copy of a Letter of October 30, 1934, from Major Thomson, President of the Relief Committee, Mosul, to His Excellency the Minister of the Interior.*

I SUBMIT the following note on the closing of that portion of the refugee camp which contained women and children whose husbands were strong, active men and either living in the camp or else living in the Muhalla quarter of Mosul. Undoubtedly many of the latter have had employment during the past year and earned a livelihood.

Since the Government in August last decided to close this portion of the camp, the women and their husbands were repeatedly warned of the fact and the conditions. In addition Qasha Yukhanna and the other leaders of these people in Mosul were informed of the terms offered, namely, 4 I.D. to each woman and 2 I.D. to each child. It was explained that in addition to the above offer, there was a further offer of agricultural assistance to those prepared to accept it.

Attention was also drawn to the message from the committee of the League of Nations dealing with the Assyrian question which advised the Assyrians to carry on a normal life and cultivate pending the final decision as to their new home.

The opinion generally expressed by leaders was that the offer was fair and they would advise their followers to accept it.

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Unfortunately, there has been very strong local propaganda against the two offers. This propaganda has been instigated undoubtedly by outside influences.

Those spreading this propaganda are mainly persons who are employed in Mosul and who have nothing to lose by their action.

It is of interest as an example of the general mentality of the Assyrian people to note that while, on the one hand, these families at the camp refuse to accept any grant of money, on the other hand, numbers of Assyrians have come to me asking to be given assistance to cultivate and carry on their normal lives.

In my opinion a considerable proportion of those Assyrians who are living in Mosul are of the parasitic type, they don't want to work and prefer to live on the charity of their friends and relatives. I have found work for many, but in some cases they have refused it on the grounds that the pay is not sufficient though it is the local rate of daily wage.

#### October 14.

I interviewed all the husbands having families in the camp, and warned them that the Government was closing the camp in so far as they were concerned on Monday, the 15th. I explained the offers of the Government to them and advised them to accept them. They refused to remove their families or accept the offers of the Government.

#### October 15.

Major Wilson and myself visited the camp at 9 A.M. and told each man who was in the camp to remove his family, and offered them the Government's grant-in-aid.

They again refused. They were taken into custody by the police, but later agreed to remove their families.

The women caused a considerable amount of commotion for a time. I then personally visited each tent and once more explained the position to them, but they still refused the offer. Many women came to me and told me privately that they wished to accept the offer but were being intimidated by some of the other women, and were afraid of the consequences of their accepting the money.

#### October 16.

Endeavours were made all day to persuade these people to reconsider their attitude.

#### October 17.

Qasha Yukhana visited me in my office as the delegate of the Assyrians in the Muhalla quarter. He informed me that the families were prepared to accept the grant offered by Government and remove their families, provided that I gave a written undertaking that—

1. The acceptance of the money would not entail a compulsory return to the villages.
2. The acceptance of the money would not be an obstacle to their leaving the country eventually.
3. The money offered was a gift and not a loan.

I gave him this guarantee in writing and it was also signed by Major Wilson.

#### October 18.

Qasha Yukhana returned and informed me that he had summoned his people to the church and had read and shown them my guarantee, but that owing to the strong propaganda against the offer of the Government, the people would not accept my guarantee and definitely refused the offer, in spite of all his efforts of persuasion.

#### October 19-20.

Every possible influence was brought to bear on those people to endeavour to make them change their minds.

#### October 21.

The situation now was such that it had passed outside the sphere of my duties and responsibilities. The position has been thoroughly discussed with the Govern-

ment, and I could do no more. I informed the mutessarif, Mosul Liwa, to this effect, and informed him that further action rested with him.

He then decided that no rations were to be issued as from Tuesday, the 23rd October, and that the tents should be removed on Thursday, the 25th October.

He made the necessary arrangements to have his instructions carried out.

Each family was allowed to remove everything with which they had been supplied while in the camp.

Moreover, every woman and child was supplied with a dress, and a warm overcoat before leaving the camp, and every pregnant woman, of whom there were thirty-six, was given all the necessary clothing for a new-born child.

The question of the housing of these families was investigated and suitable empty houses were available in the Muhalla quarter for these people. They were informed that the payment of rental could be arranged, but even this had no effect.

There now remain in the refugee camp 36 old and infirm men and 27 wives and 37 children. Also 136 widows and 170 children—a total of 406 persons.

[E 7286/1/93]

No. 83.

*Sir John Simon to Sir F. Humphrys (Bagdad).*

(No. 842.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 6, 1934.*

AS you are aware, the preliminary report of General Browne's mission to British Guiana to investigate the possibilities of the Rupununi district of that colony for the resettlement of the Assyrians from Iraq is expected very shortly, and I have recently had under consideration, in consultation with the other interested Departments of His Majesty's Government, the situation which would be likely to arise should that report prove unfavourable. Such a possibility is, unfortunately, far from being out of the question. As you are aware, it was because His Majesty's Government found it impossible, on the information available, to decide upon the practicability of the proposal to settle the Assyrians in British Guiana that that proposal was put forward to the League of Nations in so tentative a manner, and that so much emphasis was laid upon the necessity of its investigation by an independent mission. It is still most doubtful whether climatic conditions will be found to be such as to offer a reasonable prospect of the Assyrians thriving in the colony, while reports have been received suggesting that the soil may possess insufficient phosphates to make agriculture remunerative. Moreover, as your Excellency knows, certain large areas have already been set aside as Indian reservations on which it would be impossible to encroach, and if the area of suitable land should prove more limited than was at first anticipated, the extent of these reservations may cause a further complication. While His Majesty's Government greatly hope that these obstacles may not prove insuperable, they are clearly sufficiently serious to make it desirable to face without further delay the situation which may arise if General Browne's mission finds itself obliged to send an unfavourable report on the prospects of the scheme.

2. In such an event—or if General Browne's report were of so doubtful a character as to postpone a definitely favourable decision for a further considerable period—the news would be likely to reach Iraq very rapidly, since it would be impossible to conceal the nature of the report either in Georgetown or in Geneva. It is important, therefore, to consider the effect which such an adverse or uncertain report would have, on the one hand, in Iraq, both on the Assyrians and the Iraqis, and, on the other, in Geneva on the Assyrian Committee and on the Council of the League, with special regard to the relations between the League and the Iraqi Government.

3. As regards the effect in Geneva, you will be aware from the proceedings of the Assyrian Committee during the past year that whenever difficulties have arisen there has been a strong tendency to abandon the idea of settlement outside Iraq and to press for the resettlement of the Assyrians in Iraq itself under certain specific safeguards. There is every reason to believe that, in the event of General Browne's report on the British Guiana scheme proving unfavourable, neither the Assyrian Committee nor the Council itself would be willing to consider further



alternatives, even if any such alternatives should have been seriously put forward. The vague and tentative French suggestions for settlement in the bend of the Niger or in French Guiana seem hardly likely to offer practicable alternatives. Nor does there appear to be any real hope of a satisfactory resettlement of any large numbers of Assyrians in Syria—a proposal which, even if accepted by the French, would be open to many serious objections. For these and other reasons it seems clear that the League would almost certainly in such circumstances revive the proposal for the resettlement of the Assyrians in Iraq and for the establishment of safeguards for their future, and in such an event a serious dispute between the League and the Iraqi Government may be expected to arise, with results which might prove far-reaching.

4. But, apart altogether from the Geneva aspect of this question, the news that the British Guiana scheme was impracticable, or that a decision in regard to it must be deferred for a further indefinite period, may be expected to lead to very serious reactions in Iraq. You have yourself stated in the course of the oral discussions which took place during your visit to England last summer on leave that you regard it as essential that between 6,000 and 8,000 of the Assyrians should be removed from Iraq in the near future if a further disaster is to be avoided. If, however, British Guiana proves unsuitable and the Assyrian Committee and the Council of the League decide not to pursue further the search for an alternative destination, it will become clear that these people must remain indefinitely where they are. The situation in the Assyrian districts appears to be far from satisfactory, and there seems no doubt that it contains sufficient inflammable material for a very small spark to cause a new and serious conflagration.

5. I am well aware of the fact that many of these difficulties are due to the attitude of the Assyrians themselves, who, influenced no doubt by the Patriarch and his party as well as by the risks and uncertainties of the situation, have refused the assistance offered to them by the Iraqi Government to enable them to resume their normal life pending emigration. I am aware that many of the Assyrians have developed a refugee mentality, and that they have preferred to rely on voluntary help from outside in case of need rather than to become self-supporting by returning to their villages, ploughing their land and sowing their crops. Whatever the causes of the present situation may be, however, there seems little doubt that it contains grave elements of danger.

6. This danger is likely to be much aggravated by the fact that hardship and distress among the Assyrians may be expected to be more serious this winter even than last. Even in the country districts in which the Assyrians have remained or to which they have partially returned, there seems to be good reason to believe that the Assyrians are subject to a considerable amount of petty vexation, injustice and robbery, which seems likely to bring about a situation of increasing tension. The reports which had already reached me of small but constant thefts of livestock, crops, tools, utensils, building materials and even ploughs left in the fields in accordance with local custom, have recently been confirmed in conversations which members of my staff have held with Mr. Cumberland, the very level-headed and well-informed American missionary in Dohuk, who is well known to you and who recently passed through London on his way to America. I understand that in such cases the Assyrians find considerable difficulty in obtaining effective redress owing to the fact that the police and the local authorities, though often not ill-disposed, are still influenced by their recollection that those who helped or protected the Assyrians in the summer and autumn of 1933 obtained no commendation or reward, while those who were most active against them have not only suffered no punishment, but in many cases have gained materially.

7. It appears indeed that many of those responsible for the excesses of 1933—for instance, a notorious police sergeant from Simel and various village headmen in the Dohuk area—were, after a short period, promoted or specially favoured, and that the significance of this fact has not been lost either upon the police or local authorities as a whole, or upon the Kurds, whose attitude is an important factor in considering the dangers of the situation. It is no doubt true that in 1933 many of the leading Kurds did much to help and protect the Assyrians; but there seems good reason to believe that in the event of further trouble they will be unwilling or unable to take a similar line or at least to restrain their followers. I have, in fact, heard of no action being taken against those Kurds who took part

in the looting in 1933, but many observers have testified to the discontent of those Kurds who did not participate in this looting, and to their determination to obtain a due share of loot before the Assyrians eventually depart from Iraq. These circumstances, which must be well known to the Assyrians and may in fact be represented in an exaggerated form to those who have not yet returned to their villages, have no doubt greatly increased the difficulty of persuading the Assyrians in Mosul to resume their normal life.

8. Apart from these circumstances, which, combined with the wretched conditions under which a section at all events of the Assyrians appear to be living, might well be enough to produce an extremely dangerous situation, the position is further complicated by the unfortunate influence of the Patriarch, who still appears to command the blind allegiance of a very large section, or, as many maintain, of the majority of the Assyrian community. The Patriarch's efforts have, as you are well aware, had the effect of increasing, rather than diminishing, the difficulties of the Assyrian problem since the troubles of August 1933. Not only can the Patriarch not be counted upon to exercise a moderating influence upon his people, but he appears to have deliberately refrained from encouraging, if he has not actively discouraged, any return by his people to normal life pending emigration from Iraq. It appears, moreover, that there is in the Patriarch's party in Iraq an active group of propagandists who may easily create trouble in the very unstable and uncertain situation which will exist should the British Guiana scheme prove impracticable. There is, as you are aware, no means at present of changing this situation. The Patriarch's influence is a fact which must be faced and reckoned with. Moreover, an open breach between His Majesty's Government and the Patriarch would, in present circumstances, only still further complicate the situation, since it is likely to prove extremely difficult to bring about any kind of solution of the Assyrian problem without the Patriarch's acquiescence, if not his active co-operation.

9. I have so far described the dangers of the situation, as I see them, in the light of the various reports which have reached me, entirely in relation to the possible breakdown of the British Guiana scheme. They seem to me, however, so serious as to make it desirable to consider without further delay the possibility of further trouble occurring, even if General Browne's preliminary report from British Guiana should be of a favourable character. It must be remembered that even in that event there will still inevitably be many further serious difficulties and delays, particularly in regard to finance, before any emigration scheme can be put into effect. A favourable preliminary report will not necessarily be final, and it will be necessary to await a detailed report, which cannot be available before the end of January, before any concrete proposals can be placed before the Assyrians. The scheme will then have to be put before the Assyrians themselves, and there have been indications that many of them may find it extremely unpalatable. Moreover, much preparatory work will have to be carried out, both in Iraq and in British Guiana before any large-scale migration can be undertaken. It is most doubtful whether it will be possible, even in the most favourable circumstances, to transport any considerable number of Assyrians from Iraq before the autumn of 1935. Meanwhile, the dangers of the situation are not likely to grow less. This aspect of the matter has recently been much insisted upon in ecclesiastical circles in this country, and it is not possible for His Majesty's Government to reply to the expression of such misgivings with mere general reassurances that the situation need cause no real anxiety.

10. His Majesty's Government, therefore, feel that it is essential to consider as a matter of urgency what measures, if any, can be taken to reduce the risk of further trouble breaking out, and to decide on the policy to be followed should troubles nevertheless occur in spite of any such precautions. It is clearly extremely difficult to estimate with any precision the chances of an incident occurring, and I am well aware that the Assyrians, being for the most part disarmed and in a more or less cowed condition, are less likely to provoke an incident than they were before the troubles of August 1933. Nevertheless, the increasing destitution of a large number of the Assyrians, the continuance of the petty vexations to which they are undoubtedly, though possibly inevitably, subjected, and the combination of prolonged idleness, penury and fear, reacting on an essentially hot-headed and short-sighted people, might easily, it seems to me, lead a small body of the wilder spirits among them, particularly if prompted by the intrigues of the Patriarchal party, to commit some desperate act of folly



or aggression, which might in turn lead to severe reprisals and far-reaching results. Mr. Cumberland, whose sound judgment and level-headedness are widely acknowledged, endorses the views I had already formed as to the reality of this danger, and I consider that his opinion must carry considerable weight.

11. It is difficult to forecast in what form any danger is likely to arise. The possibility of a concentration by the Assyrians in the Amadia district, where they are understood to be still well armed, cannot presumably be entirely ruled out, and any such concentration could no doubt be joined by Assyrians from other districts and from Mosul. Such a movement would, however, be in the nature of an open rebellion, and in such circumstances the Iraqi Government could probably be left to deal with the situation in the same way as with a rebellion on the part of the Kurds or other sections of Iraq, while the policy of His Majesty's Government would necessarily be confined to endeavouring to localise the trouble.

12. A much more probable contingency, however, appears to be that which would arise from some isolated act of folly on the part of a small group of Assyrians leading to immediate retaliation as suggested in paragraph 10 above. The experience of 1933 shows that such an incident might quickly spread, and that the Chaldeans and other non-Moslem minorities of Mosul and its surrounding villages might easily become involved. The possibility of the news of trouble in the villages becoming the signal for a round-up and massacre of some minority element in Mosul clearly cannot be excluded.

13. I need not emphasise to you the extremely difficult position in which His Majesty's Government would be placed should the situation get out of hand in this way, and should any active movement be allowed to develop in Northern Iraq—particularly in Mosul—against the Assyrians or other Christian minorities. The peculiar position of His Majesty's Government in Iraq, the large material British interests involved, and, in particular, the presence of the Royal Air Force in Mosul, in the immediate neighbourhood of the probable scene of any disturbance, would make it extremely difficult for the latter to remain indifferent to, or unaffected by, any such outbreak, particularly if it took the form of an attack on a Christian minority. Apart from the strong feelings which would be aroused in public opinion in this country were British forces to remain inactive during and in the immediate neighbourhood of anti-Christian excesses, His Majesty's Government, as a member of the Council of the League of Nations, could not remain indifferent to the fate of minorities for whose proper treatment the Iraqi Government gave special guarantees at the time of Iraq's admission to membership of the League.

14. At the same time, it is obviously in the highest degree undesirable that His Majesty's Government should be dragged into intervention in Iraq on behalf of a minority against the Iraqi Government, or into assisting the Iraqi Government in putting down its own unruly elements. In any eventuality, such an outbreak as that the possibility of which I have indicated would be likely to cause His Majesty's Government further serious loss of prestige in Iraq and the Middle East, since, if they remained inactive, they would be despised by the Moslems for having failed to afford any protection to the Christians, and regarded by the Christians as having abandoned them to their fate, while, if they were to intervene on either side, they might become most seriously involved, with consequences the gravity of which I need not further emphasise at this stage. It is clear, therefore, that any trouble on the lines which I have foreshadowed would confront His Majesty's Government with a most embarrassing dilemma and could not fail to have a profound effect upon their whole policy in regard to Iraq. In these circumstances, it seems essential, whether the British Guiana scheme proves practicable or not, to take every possible step to anticipate such trouble and to prevent the risk of its development.

15. It seems clear that, whatever may be the attitude of the Assyrians, over which His Majesty's Government are not in a position to exercise any influence, the decisive factor is likely to be the attitude of the Iraqi Government. There seems no doubt that with the forces and organisation at their disposal the Iraqi Government are, in fact, in a position to prevent serious disturbances occurring, and to check any acts of retaliation or reprisal on any considerable scale by Kurds or Arabs against the Assyrians, even if a small group of the latter should seek to provoke trouble. One of the main dangers of the present situation, however, seems to lie in the indifference which the Iraqi Government showed in connexion with the troubles of 1933. The impression which their apparent condonation of

the Simel massacre and of the subsequent looting and excesses seems to have produced in Iraq may well lead the Kurds to imagine that, in the event of any incident occurring which would give them an excuse for acts of aggression against the Assyrians, no more effective steps would be taken to punish them than were taken against the majority of those guilty of excesses a year ago. Incidentally, the Iraqi Government, by allowing any outbreak to occur, would be playing into the hands of the extremists on the Assyrian side, who, as you know, would be by no means averse to seeing a recurrence of the troubles of 1933.

16. It appears, therefore, most desirable that the Iraqi Government should give clear evidence in advance, and before further trouble breaks out, of their determination to suppress disorder from whatever quarter it may arise, and that they should let it be clearly and generally understood in the Kurdish districts that no victimisation of the Assyrians will be allowed even in retaliation for Assyrian provocation. If the Iraqi Government could be induced to do this, I feel that the risk of an incident arising, or at any rate spreading to dangerous dimensions, would be greatly reduced.

17. If the Iraqi Government should fail to take these steps and should allow trouble to develop, possibly ending in a serious anti-Christian outbreak in Mosul or elsewhere, it might, for the reasons given in paragraph 13 above, be extremely difficult for the British forces to refrain from intervening. It is therefore conceivable that a situation might arise in which His Majesty's Government would be faced with the alternative of a humiliating withdrawal, which might be fatal to their prestige, or of action which might involve them in serious operations which could only be sustained by a virtual resumption of physical control over the affected area. It is clearly impossible at the present stage for His Majesty's Government to contemplate so far-reaching a suggestion as the resumption of direct physical control in any part of Iraq, but it is difficult to see what clear alternative policy they could pursue in the event of the Iraqi Government allowing a serious outbreak to occur. Before considering this aspect of the matter further, I shall welcome your views as to the action which it would be open to His Majesty's Government to take in such an eventuality. You will no doubt consult the Air Officer Commanding before replying on this aspect of the question.

18. I shall in any case be glad to receive your Excellency's views at a very early date on all the various aspects of the problem discussed in this despatch. In view of the imminence of the issue of General Browne's preliminary report, you may think it well to send me your preliminary views by telegram. I fully realise that the dangers anticipated in this despatch may never materialise, and that, more especially if General Browne's report is not unfavourable, the situation may drift on without seriously deteriorating further, and may even gradually improve. It may be that the Iraqi Government are already fully alive to these dangers, and to the extremely grave reaction on the international position of Iraq, which any recurrence, on however small a scale and at whoever's instigation, of the troubles of 1933, would bring about. Nevertheless, the consequences of any trouble would be so serious, not only for Iraq but also for His Majesty's Government, and might so gravely imperil the future of the constructive work which has, largely through your own personal efforts, hitherto been achieved in Iraq, that it is clearly of the first importance to form as accurate an opinion as possible of the precise extent of these dangers, and, above all, to make every possible effort to forestall or prevent them. His Majesty's Government, in forming this opinion and in deciding on their future policy, must naturally rely mainly on your assistance and advice.

19. Meanwhile, you are authorised, without waiting for further instructions, and should you consider it desirable to do so, to use all your influence with the Iraqi Government, with a view to making them realise the potential dangers of the situation, and the importance of assuring themselves of the reliability of their officials in the northern districts, of issuing appropriate instructions to all such authorities, and of leaving the Kurds under no misapprehension as to the severe measures which would be taken against anyone indulging in looting or any other acts of aggression (in whatever way they may be provoked) against the Assyrians or the other Christian minorities of Iraq.

I am, &c.

JOHN SIMON.



[E 7085/1/93]

No. 84.

*Sir John Simon to Sir F. Humphrys (Bagdad).*

(No. 847.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, December 7, 1934.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 663 of the 14th November regarding the partial closure of the Assyrian refugee camp at Mosul.

2. The situation revealed in that despatch causes me considerable uneasiness. I should be glad to receive a further report as to the eventual disposal of those persons belonging to categories C and D who, on leaving the camp, bivouacked outside the French consulate, and as to whether the Iraqi Government's offer of monetary assistance was more generally accepted before the expiry of the time-limit announced by the mutessarif. On the information at present available, however, it appears probable that some 270 Assyrians have, in fact, been turned adrift without means of support, and that the burden on the Assyrian community in Mosul has been to that extent increased.

3. It is true that this state of affairs would not have arisen but for the folly of the Assyrians themselves in refusing the assistance offered to them. On the other hand, justifiable as the policy of the Iraqi Government may have been in reducing the number of persons in the camp, it might have been politically wiser for them to have refrained from putting it into effect. These considerations, however, do not alter the fact that the situation which appears to exist, whatever its cause and wherever the responsibility for it may lie, is likely to add seriously to the possibility of further trouble and to enhance the dangers on which I have addressed you at length in my despatch No. 842 of the 6th December.

I am, &amp;c.

JOHN SIMON.

[E 7372/190/93]

No. 85.

*Memorandum respecting Commercial Interests of British India in Iraq.—*  
(Communicated by His Majesty's Embassy at Bagdad, November 28;  
Received in Foreign Office, December 10.)

THE commercial relations of India with Mesopotamia appear to go back at least as far as the year 1639, when a British factory was established at Basra. By the year 1661 the volume of these relations, and the frequency of visits to that port by merchantmen of the East India Company, had so far developed that it was deemed necessary to define the rights and obligations of British traders in Mesopotamia, with particular regard to sea and river-borne traffic, in a treaty between Great Britain and Turkey. These rights and obligations were confirmed and amplified by subsequent treaties negotiated at varying intervals of time, and although India is not specifically mentioned therein, the traders whose interests it was sought to protect or promote were, in general, more closely associated with India than with Great Britain itself or with any other part of the British Dominions or Dependencies.

With the development of steam navigation and the resultant speeding-up of communications, the tendency was for traders established in India to lose their predominant position in the foreign trade of Mesopotamia in the face of competition by firms in Great Britain and on the continent of Europe; and of recent years Japanese competition has made its appearance, with the result that at the present moment India's share of the trade of Iraq is probably lower than it has ever been before, amounting to less than 9 per cent. for imports and to just over 10 per cent. for exports. Her share of the cotton goods import trade is still quite considerable on paper (19 per cent.), but a quantity, not easily or exactly ascertainable, of imports of this category classified as of Indian origin on the ground that they reach Iraq from Indian ports are, in reality, Japanese manufactures, exported in the first place to India and thence re-exported to Iraq. India's other principal exports to Iraq are tea (16 per cent. of the total) and timber (19 per cent.). Of Iraqi produce, India takes a considerable quantity of dates (36,000, of a total of 114,000, tons in the financial year 1932-33), these being the cheaper varieties of that commodity, and some wheat and hides and skins.

The number of Indian and Anglo-Indian residents, permanent and temporary, in Iraq is very large, falling probably not far short of 30,000. They may be divided into six categories, as follows:—

- (a) Permanent residents in the Shia Holy Cities of Kerbala and Najaf.
- (b) Pilgrims to the Shia Holy Shrines.
- (c) Pensioners of the Indian Government.
- (d) Employees of Iraqi Government Departments, in particular, the Iraq Railways Administration.
- (e) Domestic servants.
- (f) Individuals engaged in commercial pursuits.

The number of Indian Shia Moslems belonging to category (a) must be in the neighbourhood of 20,000. Only an approximate computation is possible, since there is no system of compulsory registration of British subjects in force, and there has hitherto been little advantage in the possession of documentary proof of British nationality by these individuals. With the enactment of a Military Service Law in Iraq, however, considerable importance may in the near future attach to the possession of foreign nationality papers, and already applications to the British consulate at Bagdad for passports are increasing rapidly in number. But it cannot be said that the persons comprised in this category exercise, or are ever likely to exercise, any influence on the commercial exchanges between India and Iraq. They are not, as a rule, traders, and have, indeed, as is usually the case with Shia Moslems, little aptitude for commerce; while, as consumers, they have no preference for Indian products, having lost all touch with India and having become, in the course of generations, indistinguishable in customs, as in speech and appearance, from the Arab and Persian population.

(b) Indian pilgrims to the Holy Shrines and Cities number on an average between 3,000 and 4,000 annually, the majority of whom are of the poorer classes. Their influence on commerce is negligible.

(c) Pensioners of the Indian Government permanently resident in Iraq number some sixty-nine persons, the amount of their monthly pensions varying from 3 to 4 rupees to 650 rupees or more. Only those in receipt of comparatively large pensions, who are few in number, maintain any sort of connexion with their country of origin.

(d) The number of British Indian nationals employed by Iraqi Government Departments was very considerable during the British occupation of Mesopotamia, and in the early stages of the mandatory régime in Iraq. At the present time there are few British Indians so employed outside the Iraq Railways Administration. That administration bears on its pay-rolls some 180 persons of British Indian extraction, most of them being employed in subordinate capacities. These individuals are domiciled in India and spend their periodical leave in India; and their presence in Iraq operates to create a demand for Indian products of various kinds. It is inevitable, however, that they should decrease in number as Iraqi nationals become fitted to perform the duties at present assigned to non-Iraqis.

(e) A number of Indian cooks, personal servants and laundrymen are employed in Iraq, the idea of domestic service being essentially foreign to Arab mentality. Indians are, nevertheless, being slowly displaced by Iraqis in this sphere of occupation, a process to which the exorbitant wage demands of the former contribute not a little.

(f) Commercial pursuits. There is no British Indian firm or individual engaged in commerce on a large scale in Iraq. The qualifications of the native of British India are not, in general, of a nature to enable him to compete in the larger commercial fields with European firms, whilst in retail trading they are no match for the Bagdad Jew.

There is one Indian shipping agent in Iraq, Haji Jethabthai Gokal, of Basra (with head office at Joria Kathiawar, India, and a branch at Karachi), holding the agency of the Swedish East Asiatic Company (Limited), of Gothenberg, and of the Eastern Steam Navigation Company, of Bombay.

In tailoring and outfitting, the Indian merchants are supreme, all the principal bespoke tailors being natives of India. They do not compete in the ready-made clothing trade, but a number of them are concerned with the importation of second-hand clothes. Most of the Indian outfitting firms also deal in sports goods.



The principal ice factory, a commodity in increasing demand in Bagdad, is run by the Indian firm of K. S. Abdul Ali and Co., who are also large importers of paints and varnishes.

A number of Indian firms deal in fancy goods, Indian silks and embroideries and curios.

For the rest, Indians are engaged in a variety of forms of retail trade, generally of minor importance, of which some indication may be obtained from the list enclosed in this note.<sup>(1)</sup>

It will be gathered from the contents of this memorandum that the prospects of increased commercial exchanges between India and Iraq are not encouraging. The Indian population of Iraq, and, in particular, that section of it which serves to promote the commercial relations between the two countries, must inevitably decrease in size as the technical equipment of the Iraqi improves; whilst in the larger commercial field the principal Indian products have to contend with intense Japanese competition. The Iraqi Government have not hitherto made much progress in their attempts to secure increased importation of Iraqi products by Japan as an offset to the rapidly growing exports of Japanese textiles to Iraq. But in March 1935 Iraq will recover her freedom of action, in the matter of customs dues, *vis-à-vis* Japan, and there are indications that she may then adopt measures to restrict the entry of Japanese goods. The Iraqi Government have already approached the Government of India, through His Majesty's Embassy at Bagdad, with the demand, which appears on the face of it to be ill-reasoned, that the Indian duties on dates and other Iraqi produce be reduced, on the grounds that Indian tariff charges have been greatly increased of late, to the detriment of Iraq's export trade, and that the balance of trade is heavily in favour of India. This matter is still under consideration by the Government of India.

C. A. W. WERE.

Bagdad, November 1934.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

[E 7381/1/93]

No. 86.

[C./Min.Ass./85.]

Geneva, December 7, 1934.

# LEAGUE OF NATIONS: SETTLEMENT OF THE ASSYRIANS OF IRAQ.

*Letter, dated December 3, 1934, from the Head of the Permanent Delegation of Iraq accredited to the League of Nations, giving information on the situation in Mosul Camp, and forwarding a copy of a letter, dated October 30, 1934, from Major D. B. Thomson to the Minister of the Interior of Iraq, on the same subject.—(Received in Foreign Office, December 11.)*

To the Secretary-General,

December 3, 1934.

BY my letter No. 613 of the 31st August, 1934 (document C./Min.Ass./59), I had the honour to inform the chairman of the Committee for the Settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq that an agreement had been reached between the French authorities in Syria and the Iraqi Government for the transfer to Syria, in consideration of a payment of 10,000 I.D., of 1,400 Assyrians, dependants of the men already interned there. By my letter No. 671 of the 25th September, 1934 (document C./Min.Ass./69), I reported that 1,415 persons had been successfully transferred up to the 20th September. In November, at the request of the authorities in Syria, ninety-two more persons were sent to join their relatives.

2. Although the Government had long felt that the maintenance of the refugee camp was extravagant, entirely unconstructive and demoralising to the inmates themselves, and that some better method should be found of spending the limited funds available, it nevertheless continued to maintain it in the daily expectation that a decision would be reached for the early transfer to Brazil of

such Assyrians as might express the desire to leave Iraq. In June 1934 it was learned that the scheme would not go forward, and by my letter of the 31st August, 1934, already referred to, I informed you that the Government had appointed a committee to consider the future of the camp. Action on the report of this committee was, however, suspended until October. By this time the British and French Governments had made their offers to consider the possibility of settling Assyrians in British Guiana and French West Africa. But it was clear that a considerable time must in any case still elapse before any transfer could take place. The Government therefore decided to proceed with the execution of the recommendations of the committee.

3. After completion of the transfer to Syria of the 1,415 persons, inmates of the camp and others, mentioned above, the population of the camp was found to consist of the following:—

Category.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.
"A" Persons having no supporters	...	136	170	306
"B" Old and infirm persons	36	27	37	100
"C" Persons with able-bodied men in camp	...	16	23	39
"D" Persons with male supporters in Iraq	...	83	127	210
	36	262	357	655

4. The policy decided on was, as stated in my letter No. 725 of the 8th October, 1934 (document C./Min.Ass./75), to maintain the camp for categories "A" and "B," 406 persons, while persons in categories "C" and "D" would receive a cash grant of 4 I.D. per adult and 2 I.D. per child and be required to rejoin their male relatives. (Many of these persons originally gained admission to the camp on false pretences, alleging that they had no such relatives.) In addition to the *per capita* grant, these persons were eligible to receive generous agricultural assistance if they returned to the villages to cultivate. The manner in which this policy was carried out, and the difficulties encountered, have been described by Major Thomson in his report C./979 of the 30th October, 1934, which I am enclosing herewith.

5. The majority of persons in categories "C" and "D" at first refused to accept the cash grant; the offer was kept open until the 14th November, 1934, by which date twenty-two women with forty-eight children, all of category "D," had accepted.

6. A number of persons in categories "A" and "B," although eligible to stay in the camp, applied to leave under the arrangements offered to categories "C" and "D." Double rates were granted to these persons, viz., 8 I.D. per adult and 4 I.D. per child; and eight men, eighteen women and nineteen children of these two categories have left the camp after receiving assistance on this scale.

7. In connexion with the decision regarding the camp, the Government set aside an additional sum for agricultural assistance. Applications for grants have been received from persons in Mosul, Tel Kaif and Al Qosh, who wished to return to their villages, and from persons already in villages who had not cultivated last year. Nearly 300 families have received assistance as follows:—

	No. of Families.	Amount. I.D.
From Mosul	78	668/965
From Shaikhan	143	700/000
From Dohuk	55	400/000
From Amadiya	8	75/000
	284	1,843/965

I have, &c.

MUZAHIM PACHACHI,  
Head of the Permanent Delegation.



Enclosure in No. 86.

*Copy of Letter No. C./979 of October 30, 1934, from Major D. B. Thomson, President of the Relief Committee, Mosul, to His Excellency the Minister of the Interior.*

I SUBMIT the following note on the closing of that portion of the refugee camp which contained women and children whose relatives were strong active men and either living in the camp or else living in the Muhalla quarter of Mosul. Undoubtedly many of the latter have had employment during the past year and earned a livelihood.

Since the Government in August last decided to close this portion of the camp, the women and their husbands were repeatedly warned of the fact and the conditions. In addition, Qasha Yuhana and the other leaders of these people in Mosul were informed of the terms offered, namely, 4 I.D. to each woman and 2 I.D. to each child. It was explained that, in addition to the above offer, there was a further offer of agricultural assistance to those prepared to accept it.

Attention was also drawn to the message from the Committee of the League of Nations dealing with the Assyrian question, which advised the Assyrians to carry on a normal life and cultivate pending the final decision as to their new home.

The opinion generally expressed by the leaders was that the offer was fair and they would advise their followers to accept it.

Unfortunately, there has been very strong local propaganda against the two offers. This propaganda has been instigated undoubtedly by outside influence.

Those spreading this propaganda are mainly persons who are employed in Mosul and who have nothing to lose by their action.

It is of interest, as an example of the general mentality of the Assyrian people, to note that while on the one hand these families ex the camp refuse to accept any grant of money, on the other hand numbers of Assyrians have come to me asking to be given assistance to cultivate and carry on their normal lives.

In my opinion, a considerable proportion of those Assyrians who are living in Mosul are of the parasitic type, they do not want to work, but prefer to live on the charity of their friends and relatives. I have found work for many, but in some cases they have refused it on the grounds that the pay is not sufficient, though it is the local rate of daily wage.

October 14.

I interviewed all the husbands having families in the camp and warned them that the Government was closing the camp, in so far as they were concerned, on Monday, the 15th. I explained the offers of the Government to them and advised them to accept them. They refused to remove their families or accept the offers of the Government.

October 15.

Major Wilson and myself visited the camp at 9 A.M. and told each man who was in the camp to remove his family, and offered them the Government's grant-in-aid.

They again refused. They were taken into custody by the police, but later agreed to remove their families.

The women caused a considerable amount of commotion for a time. I then personally visited each tent and once more explained the position to them, but they still refused the offer.

Many women came to me and told me privately that they wished to accept the offer, but were being intimidated by some of the other women and were afraid of the consequences of their accepting the money.

October 16.

Endeavours were made all day to persuade these people to reconsider their attitude.

October 17.

Qasha Yuhana visited me in my office as the delegate of the Assyrians in the Muhalla quarter. He informed me that the families were prepared to accept

the grant offered by the Government and remove their families, provided that I gave a written undertaking that—

1. The acceptance of the money would not entail a compulsory return to the villages.
2. The acceptance of the money would not be an obstacle to their leaving the country eventually.
3. The money offered was a gift and not a loan.

I gave him this guarantee in writing, and it was also signed by Major Wilson.

October 18.

Qasha Yuhana returned and informed me that he had summoned his people to the church and had read and shown them my guarantee, but that owing to the strong propaganda against the offer of the Government, the people would not accept my guarantee and definitely refused the offer in spite of all his efforts of persuasion.

October 19-20.

Every possible influence was brought to bear on those people to endeavour to make them change their minds.

October 21.

The situation now was such that it had passed outside the sphere of my duties and responsibilities. The position has been thoroughly discussed with the Government and I could do no more. I informed the mutessarif, Mosul Liwa, to this effect, and informed him that further action rested with him.

He then decided that no rations were to be issued as from Tuesday, the 23rd October, and that the tents should be removed on Thursday, the 25th October.

He made the necessary arrangements to have his instructions carried out.

Each family was allowed to remove everything with which they had been supplied while in the camp.

Moreover, every woman and child was supplied with a dress and a warm overcoat before leaving the camp, and every pregnant woman, of whom there were thirty-six, was given all the necessary clothing for a new-born child.

The question of the housing of these families was investigated and suitable empty houses were available in the Muhalla quarter for these people. They were informed that the payment of the rental could be arranged, but even this had no effect.

There now remain in the refugee camp thirty-six old and infirm men and twenty-seven wives and thirty-seven children. Also 136 widows and 170 children—a total of 406 persons.

[E 7380/1/93]

No. 87.

[C./Min. Ass./84.]

LEAGUE OF NATIONS: SETTLEMENT OF THE ASSYRIANS OF IRAQ.

Geneva, December 7, 1934.

*Letter, dated December 5, 1934, from the Permanent Delegation of Iraq to the Secretary-General, communicating copy of a memorandum, dated November 21, 1934, from the Administrative Inspector of Mosul to the Minister of the Interior, concerning the closing of a part of Mosul Camp.—(Received in Foreign Office, December 11, 1934.)*

To the Secretary-General,

December 5, 1934.

WITH reference to the report of Major Thomson, dated the 30th October, 1934 (C/979), I have the honour to send you herewith, enclosed for your information, a copy of a memorandum (No. S/84) presented by the Administrative Inspector of Mosul to the Ministry of the Interior, Bagdad, on the 21st November, 1934.

I have, &c.

MUZAHIM PACHACHI,  
Head of the Permanent Delegation.



## Enclosure in No. 87.

*Copy of Memorandum of November 21, 1934, from the Administrative Inspector, Mosul, to the Ministry of Interior, Bagdad.*

MAJOR THOMSON has already furnished a diary showing the events which took place in connexion with the closing down of that portion of the Assyrian camp which contained the wives and families of able-bodied men.

Despite written and verbal statements to the Assyrians that the money offered was in no way connected either with any idea of forcing them to return to villages or with preventing them from leaving the country in the event of a place being found for them abroad, those ejected from the camp refused to listen to reason and accept the grant-in-aid.

They bivouacked on an open space close to the French consulate and stated openly that they intended to stay there in order to excite the pity of the French consul.

They also visited the consul, who advised them to accept the money offered.

Government also offered to hire houses for them for a period of a year, but this offer, too, was refused.

Finally, the mutessarif issued these people with an ultimatum that they must move or prosecution would follow.

When officials went to convey this ultimatum to the Assyrians, one of the latter became extremely abusive and challenged the power of the Government to move them.

He was arrested and sentenced to one month's imprisonment, and the people found shelter in houses with their compatriots.

Thereafter, a certain number of families came up and accepted the grant-in-aid, though the great majority remained stubborn till the date of expiry of the offer.

A considerable number of families from categories "A" and "B" who were retained in the camp also preferred to accept the grant-in-aid and leave.

The figures of those of "A," "B" and "D" who accepted grants are shown in a statement attached herewith.

There was no lack of applications for cultivation grant both from persons in Mosul, Tel-Kaif, Al Qosh, &c., who wished to return to villages, and from persons already in villages who had not cultivated last year, and in all well over 250 families were assisted to cultivate this year.

Details of this assistance are also included in the statement attached herewith.

*Census.*

In parts of Amadia, Dohuk and Shaikhan some Assyrians were at first suspicious regarding the census, but after explanations all agreed to register, with the exception of two men in Shaikhan. These latter were put up to the courts under the Census Law.

In Mosul town, up to the time of writing, a considerable number of Assyrians have registered, but there are still some fifty-sixty men and their families who have refused to register.

Yesterday, several ringleaders of this movement, including Qasha Hanna and Shamasha Elias, were put up to the courts, and this procedure will be followed in the case of all men failing to register.

Strong propaganda emanating from Mar Shimun sources is undoubtedly being spread to prevent Assyrians registering or accepting money on the plea that such registering or acceptance will prevent their being allowed to emigrate when the time comes.

No amount of explanation or argument to the contrary avails anything.

*Despatch of Families to Syria.*

On the 15th instant, seventy-two persons accepted by the Syrian authorities were taken to the Hasiche-Syrian frontier and handed over to the French authorities there.

On the 22nd instant, a further twenty persons who missed the previous convoy were despatched in one lorry.

*Statement showing the number of Aysyrian families from categories "A," "B" and "D" who received the Government's offer, also the number of families who were given assistance for cultivation purposes.*

<i>Statement.</i>				
	Number of persons who received at the rate of 8 I.D. and 4 I.D.	Number of families.	Total amount paid. I.D. Fls.	
Category "A"	28	17	179	...
Category "B"	17	8	100	...
Category "D"	70	22	184	...
Number of persons who received at the rate of 4 I.D. and 2 I.D.				
	115	47	463	...
P.S.—	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.
Category "A"	...	17	11	28
Category "B"	8	1	8	17
Category "D"	...	22	48	70
	8	40	67	115
Number of families. Amounts paid.				
Received Government's grant for cultivation purposes from Mosul ...		78	668/965	
Received Government's grant for cultivation purposes from Shaikhan ...		143	700/000	
Received Government's grant for cultivation purposes from Dohuk...		55	400/000	
Received Government's grant for cultivation purposes from Amadia...		8	75/000	
		284	1,843/965	

[E 7480/1/93]

No. 88.

*Record of Thirty-Sixth Meeting of the Assyrian Committee held on December 11, at 4 P.M.—(Communicated by Mr. Makins (Geneva) on December 12; Received in Foreign Office, December 17.)*

THE committee had before it a memorandum by the Secretary-General on the present position of the work of the committee, two communications from the Iraqi delegation to the League of Nations concerning the situation in the camp at Mosul, and a letter from the French Government regarding the funds necessary for the completion of the settlement of Assyrians of Iraq in Syria.

The President first explained the reasons for which he had convoked the committee. The information recently received from the Iraqi Government had caused him considerable uneasiness, and he was in particular disquieted by the departure of Major Thomson and by the partial closure by the Iraqi Government of the camp at Mosul. He was not satisfied about the situation, and he was not able to take the responsibility of allowing it to continue without consulting the committee.

The Secretary, on the invitation of the President, then gave the committee a summary of the previous history of the two questions raised. As regards the departure of Major Thomson, he said that, while the major had been appointed by the Iraqi Government, this appointment had been brought about as a result of negotiations with the committee. The committee had attached great importance to the presence of a foreign expert at Mosul, and had taken note of



Major Thomson's appointment. Major Thomson had, moreover, undertaken not to leave before the work was completed, and he had also assumed the chairmanship of the relief committee at Mosul. Now he had departed without informing the committee at a time when the partial closure of the camp was creating serious problems. As regards the Mosul camp, there were several points which were not clear. The Iraqi Government had undertaken to maintain the camp; they had now, without informing the committee, pursued a policy of partial closure. It was not clear from the reports how many Assyrians remained in the camp and how many had been forced to leave it. Moreover, the camp had been, from the first, intended for Assyrians without resources; now, as result of the division into categories, it was found that there were in the camp not only persons with male supporters elsewhere in Iraq, but also with menfolk in the camp itself.

*The President* then proposed that the Iraqi representative should be invited to attend the committee and to give information on the points in doubt. He suggested that the committee should agree on a series of questions to be asked. He first proposed to enquire categorically whether the Iraqi Government had terminated Major Thomson's appointment or not.

*The United Kingdom Representative* said that on this point he understood that the correspondence quoted in the memorandum circulated by the Secretary-General gave an incorrect impression of the position. His information was that Major Thomson had left Iraq on the clear understanding that he would return when required to resume the post of President of the League Committee, and that he had actually been asked by the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs to return in February next. He, in fact, undertook to return whenever his services should be required for the purpose of preparatory work in connexion with the transference of the Assyrians to some other home. The United Kingdom representative was able to inform the committee confidentially of this, but he agreed that the information should properly come from the Iraqi representative and that a question should be addressed to him on the point.

*The Danish Representative* enquired whether the committee had authority to ask the Iraqi representative whether Major Thomson's appointment had been terminated. The committee had only taken note of the Iraqi decision to inform the committee. After some discussion, it was agreed that the committee might make enquiries on the point, in particular because they had been informed of the departure of Major Thomson by the Iraqi Government, and there was some discrepancy in the two letters which had been received on this point.

The committee then agreed on a list of questions which the President proposed to ask the Iraqi representative.

*The Iraqi Representative* joined the committee, and thanked them warmly for doing him the honour of inviting him to attend.

*The President* referred to the discrepancy in the correspondence concerning Major Thomson's departure from Iraq, and enquired whether his appointment had or had not been terminated by the Iraqi Government.

*The Iraqi Representative* replied that Major Thomson had left Iraq because he had felt he had no work to do for the time being. The Iraqi Government were willing to re-employ him when the occasion arose, and, therefore, Major Thomson had left Iraq temporarily.

*The President* asked whether Major Thomson had resigned or whether he was on leave.

*The Iraqi Representative* said that he would not call it leave.

*The President* interpreted this to mean that Major Thomson's appointment had been terminated, but that he was ready to take up his duties again when called upon to do so.

*The Iraqi Representative* said he could not answer the question specifically and must refer it to his Government.

*The President* took note of this statement and asked the Iraqi Government for a precise declaration on the point.

*The President* then asked who had replaced Major Thomson on the local committee and on the relief committee.

*The Iraqi Representative* said that the mutessarif had replaced Major Thomson on both bodies, and that he was assisted by Major Wilson.

*The President* then referred to the inconsistency in the figures for the Assyrians who were left in the camp at Mosul, and asked the Iraqi representative for the exact figure.

*The Iraqi Representative* replied that, from information he had received on the 8th December, there were 372 Assyrians left in the camp. From information received on the same date, of those Assyrians who had accepted the Government's financial offer, some had gone to their villages and others were working with relatives in Bagdad and Mosul. He recalled the advice which had been given to the Iraqi Government that they should encourage the Assyrians to leave the camp.

*The President* asked what had happened to those Assyrians who had refused the Government's offer of financial assistance.

*The Iraqi Representative* could not give definite information on this point. He would refer the matter to his Government.

*The President* then pointed out that one of the categories into which the inmates of the camp had been divided was composed of persons who had menfolk in the camp. This was the first intimation of such a thing. In which category were these men placed?

*The Iraqi Representative* admitted that this question needed explanation and he would refer the matter to his Government.

*The President* then asked whether the Iraqi representative could supply a fuller report in regard to the execution of the measures taken to close one part of the camp.

*The Iraqi Representative* said that he would have to refer this matter to his Government.

*The President* then asked whether the arrangements which the Iraqi Government had now made in regard to the camp were final, or whether the Government had other measures in contemplation.

*The Iraqi Representative* said that he would refer the matter to his Government.

*The President* then asked a question which had been suggested by the Danish representative. He enquired whether the existence of a male relative in some part of Iraq was regarded as an adequate reason for requiring him to leave the camp, or whether they informed themselves as to the economic and financial position of that relative.

*The Iraqi Representative* said that he would again refer to his Government.

*The President* took note of the Iraqi representative's answers, and begged him to get replies as soon as possible.

*The Iraqi Representative* then expressed great concern that he had not had previous knowledge of the questions which would be put to him. He had, indeed, asked the Secretariat for hints on this point, but they had been unable to give him any information. He now wished to make a declaration. The Iraqi Government repeated the assurances which they had previously made to the committee with regard to the Assyrians in Iraq. They would continue to look after their welfare and to conform to the wishes of the committee.

(He then withdrew.)

The committee, on the proposal of the President, then agreed to defer consideration of the questions raised pending replies from the Iraqi Government.

The committee then considered the question of the relief of necessitous Assyrians.

*The Secretary* mentioned a communication which he had received from an Assyrian in Geneva, one Malik Andreos, containing alarmist prognostications as to the prospects of the Assyrians in Iraq during the coming winter.



The United Kingdom Representative was able to inform the committee confidentially that information which had been received from a neutral and thoroughly trustworthy source tended to show that accounts of hardship and destitution among the Assyrians should be treated with reserve; while it could not be said that there would be no distress among them during the winter, according to this information there was little likelihood of serious destitution occurring.

The President said that he was relieved to have this information.

A letter had been received from the Nansen representative in Syria asking for further assistance for the settlement of Assyrians in that country. The Secretary had also received a letter from Major Johnson of the Nansen Office, enclosing a draft appeal to various humanitarian and eleemosynary societies interested in the relief of refugees, asking for contributions towards the relief of refugees generally (Russians, &c.); the list of refugees in need of assistance included the Assyrians in Syria and the Assyrians in Mosul. It was explained that appeals of this character were sent out from time to time by the Nansen Office in the ordinary course of its work.

The committee decided that they could neither approve nor reject the despatch of this communication and could take no responsibility for it.

The President then enquired whether the French Government had received any reply from French Guiana.

The French Representative said that in spite of constant reminders the Government of the colony had still failed to furnish the necessary particulars.

The President said that it was important to have this information since it might be necessary to decide whether the mission to British Guiana should visit French Guiana on their way home.

The committee eventually, after some discussion, agreed that if the reply from British Guiana was favourable it would be useless for the mission to visit French Guiana. If it was unfavourable and satisfactory information was received from French Guiana, then the question might arise. It was not, however, necessary to take any decision for the moment, but the members of the committee would be consulted on this point if the need arose.

The committee then considered a letter from the French Government regarding the additional funds necessary for the completion of the settlement of the Assyrians from Iraq in Syria.

The French Representative expressed the opinion that this question might be postponed until the question of the future of the Assyrians could be considered as a whole. He explained that the matter was not one of extreme urgency.

The French Representative also informed the committee that enquiries in French possessions showed that there was no possibility of settling the Assyrians, as a whole, in any one colony. Small numbers of Assyrians might, perhaps, be taken in different colonies, but further than this the French Government could not go.

(The committee then adjourned.)

R. M. MAKINS.

[E 7617/1/93]

No. 89.

Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 277.)

(Telegraphic.)

Bagdad, December 19, 1934.

YOUR despatch No. 842.

Detailed reply by despatch will be sent as soon as possible, but will take time, as I shall have to consult Air Officer Commanding, Cornwallis (who is away on tour) and Wilson. I offer following preliminary observations:—

1. I cannot contemplate possibility of failure to make offer of new home outside Iraq to those ex-Ottoman Assyrians who wish to leave. Such failure would inevitably result sooner or later in grave disorders in which His Majesty's Government could hardly escape becoming involved.

2. I consider it possible that offer of British Guiana, if made, will be refused by Assyrians, as there is evidence of propaganda to this effect emanating from Patriarch. If British Guiana fails, for whatever reason, I strongly advocate alternative home being found by League closer to Iraq.

3. In spite of obvious objections, some of which I have already pointed out (see paragraph 3 of my despatch No. 612 of 21st September), offer of Syria would be far preferable to retention in this country of refugees who are unwilling to stay. My impression is that French would not be averse from making offer if invited to do so by the League, and it seems likely that sufficient land could be found there for all ex-Ottoman Assyrians who wish to leave Iraq.

4. I agree that risk of disorder lies chiefly in danger of desperate acts of folly by some Assyrians followed by severe reprisals, but consider it most unlikely that these reprisals would be taken by tribes, except in isolated cases, without encouragement from Iraqi Government. I therefore suggest that my efforts should be concentrated on persuading Iraqi Government to discourage retaliatory measures even in face of provocation, and that issue of proclamation to tribes themselves would be likely to disturb rather than tranquillise situation.

5. I would also stress that it is high time to take measures to prevent the Patriarch from issuing propaganda liable to excite these disorders. If he could be persuaded to change his tactics and co-operate with His Majesty's Government and League of Nations, the gravest source of danger would be eliminated. It is in the temper of the Assyrians rather than in the attitude of Iraqi Government that potentialities of disorder lie. So long as former abstain from acts of folly I am confident, as I was in 1932, that Iraqi Government will not incite or conduct any form of terrorism against Assyrians.

6. Employment of Royal Air Force in Iraq on the side of the Assyrians against Iraqi Government forces must be avoided at all costs as it would inevitably spell disaster.

7. Subject to Air Officer Commanding's comments, I am of opinion that very large ground forces would be necessary for successful armed intervention (such as is foreshadowed in paragraph 17 of your despatch), cost of which would be entirely prohibitive. Moreover, employment of armed forces against our ally would entail unjustifiable reversal of policy and, when our forces were withdrawn, would involve expulsion or extermination of Christian minorities and lasting alienation of Anglo-Iraqi relations.

To sum up: We cannot abandon policy of settling outside Iraq those Assyrians who wish to leave, and some means must be found for putting this policy into effect. Resettlement within the British Empire is much the best solution, but offer of Syria through a *pis aller* is infinitely better than no offer at all. The most expensive form of resettlement would cost far less and be infinitely more satisfactory than the mildest form of physical coercion undertaken against Iraqi Government in support of a provocative minority.

[E 7699/1038/93]

No. 90.

Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received December 27.)

(No. 701.)

Sir,

Bagdad, December 12, 1934.

WITH reference to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes's despatch No. 531 of the 6th September last, I have the honour to inform you that the final polling in the general elections took place on the 6th December.

2. An analysis of the results shows that of the 88 Deputies in the new Chamber, 44 sat in the last Parliament, 23 in some previous Parliament, and 21 are entirely new blood. In general character the new Chamber differs very little from its predecessors. All the present Ministers (excepting Nuri Pasha and Abdul Husain Chalabi, who are Senators) have been elected, and familiar figures in public life, such as Yasin-al-Hashimi, Sheikh Ahmad-al-Daud and Salman-al-Barrak, will be found in their old seats.

3. Nuri Pasha tells me privately that too many of Yasin Pasha's personal supporters (about twelve) have been allowed to be elected, and he fears that the

[11508]

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security of the Government may be threatened in consequence. I gather that he himself and the Prime Minister have only about three or four nominees each in the Chamber.

4. It has not yet been decided whether Jamil-al-Madfai is to remain at the Ministry of Defence or whether he will become President of the Chamber. There is equal uncertainty as to Jafar Pasha's future when he returns to Bagdad.

5. On the day following the completion of the parliamentary elections the formation of a new party, the party of National Unity, was announced. This is intended to be the party of Ali Jaudat's Cabinet. Like previous similar parties, it is, in fact, little more than a group of Deputies, and has no organisation outside the Chamber. Its fate will probably be not unlike that of the Ahd-al-Iraqi, which was founded by Nuri Pasha when he became Prime Minister in 1930 and ceased to exist when he resigned the premiership in 1932.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

[E 7701/6495/93]

No. 91.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received December 27.)*

(No. 707. Confidential.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, December 13, 1934.*

IN your telegram No. 192 of the 6th November you instructed me to report on the general position of the Jews in Iraq, the nature and extent of Zionist propaganda, and the attitude of the Iraqi Government and public opinion towards Jews generally, and Zionist propaganda in particular.

2. There has been little recent development in the situation of the Jews in Iraq. Before the war they probably enjoyed a more favourable position than any other minority in the country. Since 1920, however, Zionism has sown dissension between Jews and Arabs, and a bitterness has grown up between the two peoples which did not previously exist. Events in Palestine are watched closely by the Arabs in Iraq, and the ebullitions of anti-Jewish feeling which have occurred there from time to time have usually found an echo here. Notable instances are the agitations which occurred in the summer of 1929, at the time of the anti-Jewish riots in Palestine, and in July 1933 in sympathy with the Arabs evicted from the Wadi Hawarith.

3. The wiser and more experienced Jews, while probably sympathising with the general aims of the Zionist movement, openly deplore the unfortunate repercussions which it has had on their position in Iraq. They appreciate that feeling is only exacerbated by Zionist propaganda, and they have no desire that it should be extended in this country.

4. The recent outburst of ill-feeling arose directly out of the dismissal of a number of Jewish officials from the Ministry of Economics and Communications, which followed the reorganisation of the Ministry carried out by Arshad Beg Al Umari when he became Minister in August last. I cannot say to what extent, if any, the Minister was animated by anti-Jewish prejudice in making these departmental changes, or how far they were genuine and necessary reforms. Local talk credits him with having repeatedly declared his intention to purge the public services of Jewish personnel, but the facts in this instance do not substantiate these stories, and his axe appears to fall on all alike whom he regards as superfluous.

5. In all, some eight senior posts were abolished. Of these, three had been held by Jews, three by Christians, and two by Mahometans. The dismissed Jewish officials at once raised a cry that they had been deprived of their posts because of their religion, and have been doing their utmost to make their reinstatement a communal rather than a personal issue. To some extent they have been successful, and the cry that the Jews in Iraq are being oppressed has been echoed abroad. The reaction in Iraq, though happily far less violent, was somewhat similar in form to that which occurred in Germany when world Jewry took up the cause of the Jews against the Nazi Government. There was a good deal of wild talk in irresponsible Moslem circles, and a number of minatory

articles appeared in the local press. I have not heard, however, of any acts of violence against individual Jews.

6. Soon after my return I spoke to the King and the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Economics and Communications, and warned them of the harm which might be done to Iraq's commercial and political interests if the hostility of world Jewry were excited by a belief that Jews in Iraq were not being fairly treated. I also reminded them of the influence of the Jews at Geneva, and of the danger of that influence being exercised against Iraq at some critical moment if Jewish antagonism were aroused. The King and his Ministers assured me that the Government had no prejudice against the Jews, and professed to see the force of my advice that special tact should be exercised in dealing with them.

7. Nuri Pasha explained that the attitude of the Iraqi Government towards the Jewish press is governed not so much by their dislike of Zionism as by an appreciation of their responsibility for keeping the peace. Jewish newspapers, both British and Palestinian, frequently contain scurrilous attacks on the Iraqi Government, and grossly misleading accounts of the situation of the Jews in this country. Matter of this kind always provokes a violent agitation in the Iraqi press, accompanied by public unrest and outbursts of anti-Jewish sentiment from such organisations as the Islamic Defence Society and the Young Men's Moslem Association. It is then often necessary for the Government to intervene to prevent a dangerous tension arising. Arab newspapers have to be suspended and demonstrations prohibited and sometimes prevented or dispersed. Two newspapers have recently been prohibited from publication for anti-Jewish propaganda, and police action has on several occasions been necessary to stop street demonstrations against Zionism.

8. In these circumstances it is, I think, understandable that the authorities should tend to strike at the roots of the trouble by endeavouring to prevent the circulation of publications containing provocative attacks on Iraq. Indeed, there is much to be said for the banning of such literature in the interests of the Jews themselves, since the exacerbation of feeling which follows its entry into this country seriously impairs their relations with the Arabs.

9. Among the Jews themselves there is, I am informed, considerable apprehension regarding the future. As I have related above, the advent of Zionism has seriously impaired their position *vis-à-vis* the Arabs in this country. The Jews realise that tension arising from Zionism is likely to strengthen rather than diminish, and I am told that Jewish emigration and the movement of Jewish capital to Palestine is increasing. I have examined the figures available in the Bagdad consulate, and I see that, whereas in 1933 there was no emigration to Palestine of persons with considerable means, approximately fifteen families, with capital averaging about £5,000 each, have gone to Palestine to settle during the period July–November of the current year. The manager of the Eastern Bank recently informed me that he estimates that about £500,000 of Jewish capital has been transferred to Palestine since the beginning of the year. Factors, other than fear for the future, such as the present prosperity of Palestine, and the attractive opportunities which it offers for the investment of capital, may account for this efflux. It may, however, be held to some extent to confirm the accounts which have reached me of Jewish uneasiness regarding the future.

10. It is difficult to estimate the extent and nature of Zionist propaganda in this country. Whenever it appears it is resented both by the Government and such public opinion as exists in the towns. In my view, there is no natural antagonism between Jew and Arab in Iraq. It is only when events and policies in Palestine are discussed and distorted in the press that anti-Jewish feelings are aroused. Normally, the two communities are friendly towards each other, as their interests do not clash.

I have, &c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.



[E 7777/1/93]

No. 92.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received December 31.)*

(No. 717.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, December 18, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that His Majesty's vice-consulate at Diana has recently reported that during the month of November some thirty families of Uramiyan Assyrians entered Iraq via the Rowanduz route, passing the frontier at Riyat. They then went on to Kirkuk and Bagdad, where they are said to have relatives who will support or employ them. These new immigrants into Iraq were in possession of Persian passports, and, although they had no visas for Iraq, the Iraqi frontier officials seem to have permitted them to enter, on compassionate grounds, without sanction from higher authority. I anticipate, however, that the Ministry of the Interior will now issue strict orders that no more Assyrians shall be allowed to enter the country in this manner.

2. In my despatch No. 266 of the 18th May, I reported a conversation which I had had with Bishop Mar Yusuf at Harir, and the account which he gave me of the sufferings of the Assyrians who are in Persia and Russia. It would appear that, in spite of the uncertainty which overshadows the position of these unfortunate people in Iraq, their circumstances in Persia are becoming intolerable, and further attempts to obtain a refuge in this country may be expected.

I have, &amp;c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

[E 7780/1/93]

No. 93.

*Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.—(Received December 31.)*

(No. 724.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, December 20, 1934.*

MY despatch No. 682 of the 29th November and its enclosure will have provided you with some of the information for which you have asked in your despatch No. 847 of the 7th December.

2. The figures given in paragraph 3 of the Iraqi Government's note to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, covering the action which has been taken partially to liquidate the Mosul camp for destitute Assyrians, show that, after the completion of the transfer to Syria of the dependents of the men who have remained there since last year, 249 persons of categories "C" and "D" remained in the camp. Of these ninety-nine were women and 150 children, all of whom had male supporters. Twenty-two women and forty-eight children accepted the Government's offer of a grant of £4 per adult and £2 per child.

3. As reported in my telegram No. 268 of the 11th December, I am enquiring generally into the possibility of distress among the Assyrians, and I will endeavour to obtain information in particular regarding the circumstances of those who have left the Mosul camp. Sir Kinahan Cornwallis reports, however, that one of the main difficulties in forming an opinion in this regard is the unwillingness of the Assyrians themselves to give information.

4. Though it is not perhaps strictly germane to the substance of the present despatch, I think it desirable to invite your attention to the following matter. From paragraph 4 of my despatch No. 689 of the 5th December you will have gathered that disciplinary action is contemplated against those Assyrian menials in the Royal Air Force cantonment in Mosul who are refusing to register under the Census Law. The Air Officer Commanding has now informed me that, if these people persist in their obstinacy, he will have no alternative but to dismiss them. Such a step will result in a further seventy-five Assyrians becoming destitute in Mosul. Further efforts are being made to bring these men to a reasonable frame of mind.

I have, &amp;c.

F. H. HUMPHRYS.

## CHAPTER III.—SYRIA AND GENERAL.

[E 4483/202/89]

No. 94.

*Consul-General Havard to Sir John Simon.—(Received July 11.)*

(No. 42.)

Sir,

*Beirut, July 2, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that since his return from Paris on the 10th March the French High Commissioner has been studying the methods that can be adopted in order to help Syrian economy.

2. He has received deputations and open letters from various branches of the commercial community, all of them emphasising the fact that taxation has now reached the point where it is definitely harmful to the State, to trade, and to the public in general. He is urged to devote especial attention to—

- (a) Reductions in the customs tariff.
- (b) Reduction in public expenditure.
- (c) Abolition of fiscal privileges.
- (d) Irrigation plans.
- (e) Customs franchise for raw materials destined for local industry.

3. As regards the customs tariff, unfavourable comparison is made with the Palestinian tariff, and the High Commissioner is urged to reduce Syrian duties to that level in order to put a stop to, amongst other things, the contraband trade over the frontier, which it is alleged has reached alarming proportions. This is certainly a well-founded complaint, customs dues in the French mandated areas being three and four times higher than those in Palestine on articles of daily necessity.

4. Public expenditure is still higher than the revenues of the mandated States can bear, and in this connexion M. de Martel has already announced economies which by 1935 will save Syria and the Lebanon about 6 million francs annually. This is obtained by reductions in emoluments in the local civil service, by suppressing certain posts and combining the functions of others, by economies in the military and gendarmerie and in material appertaining thereto; and, finally, he has suppressed certain customs privileges, such as duty-free petrol for the private cars of the civil personnel of the High Commission. He has, moreover, requested certain concessionary companies, such as the Compagnie du Port, whose charges are excessively high, to make economies in their budget, and so bring about a reduction in their charges, and he has received promises that this will be done. The Damascus-Hama Railway showed a deficit last year of over 10 million francs, and the budget of the mandated States, in virtue of the kilometric guarantee, has been obliged to make good this deficit as well as the deficits of previous years, but M. de Martel has now stated that measures have been taken to lighten this burden in future.

5. Certain schools, hospitals and missionary societies benefit up to a fixed annual amount in customs franchise on articles imported, and in view of the fact that many of these institutions are alleged to be richly endowed, public opinion considers that in the present hard times such privileges should be withdrawn. It is also alleged that the French co-operative stores, originally founded as a canteen to provide officers and men of the army of occupation with goods at wholesale prices, have so extended the circle of their clients that many people who have not the slightest right to do so make their purchases there, to the detriment of the local shopkeepers, and it is requested that an end be put to this abuse.

6. Since the mandated territories are mainly agricultural, it is urged that irrigation plans should be given pride of place in any works of public utility. The High Commissioner is giving attention to this matter, and it is likely that a barrage will be built on the Orontes River, which will bring under cultivation a larger part of the plain, in the district of Homs.

7. If the nascent local industries are to survive, they require some kind of protection and aid, and the request for customs franchise on imported raw



material is a logical way of helping them. The High Commissioner is now engaged in reviewing customs duties, and has stated that he is quite prepared to reduce them provided that the revenues formerly obtained from that source can be found elsewhere, or, alternatively, that savings can be effected in the budget which will allow such reductions to be made without incurring a deficit.

8. The reforms already announced have certainly captured local imagination and have earned for M. de Martel much eulogy in the press. Public opinion appears to be quite happy to leave matters in his hands, in the conviction that he has the economic welfare of these territories at heart.

9. I have sent a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's High Commissioner in Palestine, to the Department of Overseas Trade, and to His Majesty's consuls at Damascus and Aleppo.

I have, &c.

G. T. HAVARD.

[E 4791/6/65]

No. 95.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received July 23.)*

(No. 377.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, July 7, 1934.*

WITH reference to Sir Francis Humphrys's despatch No. 237 of the 30th April, enclosing copy of a despatch addressed to the High Commissioner for Palestine on the subject of the development of the direct Bagdad-Haifa route, I have the honour to report that Haim Nathaniel has now obtained delivery at Haifa, free of customs dues, of the Albion motor-bus destined for service on the trans-desert route. The service will be inaugurated on Monday, the 9th July, from Bagdad, and thereafter the bus will leave Haifa every Thursday, as soon as possible after arrival of the train from Egypt, returning to Haifa from Bagdad every Monday at 6 A.M.

2. The fares quoted are very reasonable—6 dinars for a Pullman seat, and 5 dinars for the ordinary accommodation. The Nairn Transport Company quote 8-500 dinars and 6-500 dinars for similar accommodation for the journey to Haifa via Damascus, while other transport companies charge as little as 3 dinars, the service provided being, however, very inferior. But none of these charges can be said to be fixed, since the companies concerned habitually reduce their fares whenever a lack of demand makes itself felt.

3. Although a start has thus been made in the development of direct passenger communication between Palestine and Iraq, there are several factors still present which are calculated to impede further progress. One of these is the insistence of the authorities in Transjordan on payment of a "passport registration fee" of 250 mills (5s.) by every person entering the country. No such charge is levied in either Syria or Palestine, and passengers by the Bagdad-Haifa route are thus penalised to that extent. I am awaiting further information concerning the exact requirements of the Transjordan Passport Law, about which there appears to be some doubt, before drawing the attention of the High Commissioner for Palestine to this obstacle to free development of passenger traffic. Another deterrent to prospective travellers by the Bagdad-Haifa route, on their way to Europe and elsewhere, is to be found in the extremely stringent regulations on the subject of visas for Palestine, which have recently been brought into force. The attention of the Director of Immigration, Jerusalem, was drawn by His Majesty's consul at Bagdad to this consequence of the regulations in paragraph 4 of his despatch of the 11th June, a copy of which was sent to you in his despatch No. 48 of the 11th June.

4. Although Haim Nathaniel has now been permitted to clear his motor-coach from customs at Haifa without payment of duty, the customs authorities at that port have presented a claim for payment of over £81 for demurrage charges. Representations have been made to the Palestine Government on Haim Nathaniel's behalf by the British commercial agent at Haifa. The result of these is not yet known here.

5. The concession made to Haim Nathaniel, in common with future operators of regular services by the direct Haifa-Bagdad route, of exemption

from duty on petrol purchased for use on the trans-desert journey, is to some extent nullified by the imposition of a municipal tax, in Transjordan, of 10 mills per gallon, plus an "inspection fee" of one-half of 1 per cent. *ad valorem*, on the petrol brought into the country in the tanks of motor vehicles. Representations on this point were made by Sir Francis Humphrys to the British Resident in Transjordan, who expressed the opinion that no case could be made out for exempting Haim Nathaniel (and others) from these charges, since Haim Nathaniel would in future purchase all his supplies of petrol, duty-free in Palestine, and that Transjordan would be deprived in consequence of the revenue hitherto derived from customs duty on petrol purchased in the country. Before approaching the British Resident again in the matter, I have thought it best, in view of the Resident's arguments, to ascertain whether transporters working the Bagdad-Damascus route are entirely exempt from similar municipal imports, and I am still awaiting information on this point.

6. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the High Commissioner for Palestine and to the Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &c.

G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

[E 4955/202/89]

No. 96.

*Consul Mackereth to Sir John Simon.—(Received July 30.)*

(No. 43.)

Sir,

*Damascus, July 9, 1934.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 35 of 14th May, 1934, I have the honour to report that the French High Commissioner assembled the Syrian journalists again on the 5th July, to report progress in what he has described as his campaign for the economic resuscitation of Syria.

2. He went over the same ground as on the previous occasion, and then added that a study of the electrification of the railway between Damascus and Beirut was being undertaken, that the barrage on the Orontes at Homs would be heightened, and that the Damascus and Aleppo commercial aerodromes would be enlarged.

3. The scheme to increase the area of the irrigated arable land of the Homs Plain by raising the level of the Homs Lake appears to me to be by far the most substantial of the projects that are at present receiving so much publicity. The idea of increasing the capacity of flood water storage in the Homs Lake, which is itself formed of a dam built some centuries ago, has from time to time been revived. In 1888 plans were prepared for raising the lake's level by 25 feet by English irrigation engineers at, I believe, the instigation of one of my predecessors—Mr. J. Dickson—but although work was begun by the Turkish authorities it was later abandoned. On the 12th June, 1929, the previous High Commissioner, M. Ponsot, instituted an organisation for the study of the irrigation needs of the Syrian Republic and for the preparation of a programme of works to be spread over twenty years. So far the programme has been followed in the main. The increase in the height of the Homs Lake dam was to follow the clearing and repairing of old irrigation and drainage canals, which had through neglect become useless. This preparatory work having been in large part completed the time for the improvement of the dam is ripe. Its completion should bring very considerable benefit by extending the area of irrigated land, suitable for growing cotton and grain, by some 30,000 acres.

4. The High Commissioner was questioned by the editor of the Arabic newspaper *Alif-Ba* about the utility of extending the railway from Tel Ziwan to the Iraq frontier now that Persia had, the editor asserted, given up the idea of using a Syrian transit port; Persia having agreed with Turkey to utilise Trebizond and Mersina. M. de Martel is reported to have replied that, although he had heard the rumour, he had had no confirmation of it; moreover, he believed that the good relations existing between Syria and Turkey were a sufficient guarantee that Turkey would not so act against Syrian interests. Combating the further suggestion that, if the Tel Ziwan extension could not be continued over the Iraqi frontier because of the Iraqi Government's failure to



co-operate, the Persians would be forced to seek a transit route other than the Syrian one, M. de Martel said that it was incorrect to say that the Iraqi Government opposed the railway prolongation. Indeed his information was, he said, that the population of Mosul was impatiently awaiting the railway line.

5. Taxed to give a reason for the cause of the differences between Syria and Transjordan, which had led to the refusal of the Transjordan authorities to allow Syrian produce to enter without prepayment of customs dues and had had the effect of accumulating large quantities of goods in the Syrian railway depots, the High Commissioner is reported to have said that he was giving that matter his consideration. He added that he was unaware that much merchandise was lying in railway warehouses on that account.

6. Asked about the Hejaz Railway, M. de Martel said that the savings and earnings from this railway had been entirely used up and that, therefore, no funds remained for capital expenditure, thus he was unable to say whether it would be possible in the future to recondition it.

7. Referring to the friendly relations existing between Saudi Arabia and the mandatory Power, the High Commissioner declared that King Ibn Saud had hastened to inform the representatives of France that his Government would not, under any circumstances, interfere in the Syrian question.

8. I am sending copies of this despatch to Angora, Bagdad, Beirut and Jerusalem.

I have, &c.

GILBERT MACKERETH.

[E 5092/6/65]

No. 97.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received August 7.)*

(No. 425.)  
Sir,

*Bagdad, July 24, 1934.*

IN paragraph 5 of my despatch No. 377 of the 7th July, reference was made to the existence of a municipal tax and an inspection fee levied in Transjordan on petrol brought into the country; and I stated that I was awaiting information as to possible similar charges in Syria before again approaching the British Resident at Amman with a view to the abolition of imposts which might be expected to affect adversely the development of the Bagdad-Haifa motor transport route.

2. I am now informed by His Majesty's consul at Damascus that similar dues are, in fact, levied in Syria, and that they are considerably more onerous than the Transjordan charges, amounting to 11½d. for every gallon of petrol, as compared with less than 2½d. in Transjordan. It is therefore clear that, in these circumstances, no good case can be made out for the abolition of the Transjordan levies. His Majesty's consul expresses the opinion, however, that the French mandatory authorities will now attempt to induce the Syrian municipal authorities to forgo this source of income, and I have requested him to inform me of any development of this nature, which might necessitate reconsideration of the question.

3. With reference to paragraph 3 of my despatch above quoted, His Majesty's consul at Damascus states that the Syrian authorities are contemplating the imposition of a levy on passengers on the lines of the "passport registration fee" charged in Transjordan, and I propose to await further developments before making any representations to the High Commissioner for Palestine in this connexion.

4. I am sending copy of this despatch to the High Commissioner for Palestine and to the Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &c.

G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

[E 5917/1/93]

No. 98.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received September 21.)*

(No. 548.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, September 14, 1934.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 209 of the 3rd September, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of some interesting notes made by Major W. C. F. A. Wilson, Administrative Inspector of Mosul, during his visit to Hassiche on the 3rd and 4th September.

2. I would draw your special attention to the view expressed by M. Burnier regarding the capacity of the Khabur lands to accommodate many more Assyrians, and also to the apparent policy of the French to encourage Christian settlement in that area.

3. A copy of this despatch is being sent to His Majesty's consul-general at Beirut.

I have, &c.

G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

Enclosure in No. 98.

*Major W. C. F. A. Wilson, Administrative Inspector, Mosul, to Sir K. Cornicallis, Adviser, Ministry of Interior, Bagdad.*

I SPENT the night of the 3rd-4th September at Hassiche and in conversation with Capitaine Dupre and M. Burnier I learned a number of interesting facts, amongst which are the following:—

(1) The French authorities have begun to realise that the Assyrians can be troublesome. They have been squabbling amongst themselves ever since they went over. It is also proving difficult to get them to do a decent day's work; the first day they started on brickmaking for their houses they refused to work for more than two hours.

(2) The Assyrians are at present being split into two villages, Tkhuma and some Diz in one, and Upper Tiari, Baz and oddments in the other.

In the spring they are to be split again to form four villages. Four iron water wheels are being ordered for irrigation.

(3) M. Burnier told me privately that he was neither French nor a politician and so could not speak of the views of the French, but that from what he had seen of the vacant Khabur lands he was convinced that many thousands more Assyrians could be accommodated there.

Thomson also got the impression that if no other solution of the Assyrian problem is found that it might later be in accordance with French policy to accept all Assyrians who might want to go to the Khabur area from Iraq.

(4) When I visited Hassiche five years ago it was predominantly Armenian. Now it has grown greatly but contains few Armenians. Both Capitaine Dupre and M. Burnier told me that the Armenians had emigrated to the new settlements along the Turkish frontier from Aleppo to Air Diwar, where they make much profit from an extensive organisation of smuggling into Turkey. This organisation is mainly financed by big Armenian merchants in Aleppo.

Now in Hassiche there are very large Syrian-Catholic and Chaldean Churches, and there is no doubt whatever that the French are using every endeavour to create there the centre of a Christian area. They are openly encouraging Chaldeans and other Christians from the Syrian cities to move to villages in this area.



[E 6239/6/65]

No. 99.

*Consul Mackereth to Sir John Simon.—(Received October 8.)*

(No. 50. Confidential.)

Sir,

*Damascus, September 10, 1934.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 26 of the 17th August, 1934, on the subject of traffic routes between Iraq and Palestine, I have the honour to refer to Bagdad despatch No. 425 of the 24th July, 1934.

2. Although the Syrian transdesert carriers, citing Palestine's benevolence, have applied for further remission of taxation to bring down the price of motor spirit to them in Syria to its ex-customs cost in Palestine, the Damascus municipality can ill afford such a gesture, also is it unlikely that the Syrian Treasury, with many new schemes to finance, will be able at present to envisage a reduction of its revenue from this source. If the price of fuel should become in the future a major factor governing the choice of the alternative Haifa route by merchants or travellers to the detriment of the Damascus route, the Syrian authorities have a substantial reserve of tax margin to bring into play. The basic c.i.f. price of petrol, fixed by the petroleum companies, is identical in Palestine and Syria. Owing to heavier interior duties the retail price (cum taxation) of motor spirit in Syria is about 3d. a gallon higher than it is in Palestine. The effect in Syria of remitting the customs duty (1.60 Syrian piastres a kilogramme) was then to lower the price level of petrol to approved transdesert carriers to that of duty-paid petrol in Palestine. The Palestine Government's ordinance of the 2nd June, 1934, has now upset that equilibrium, and petrol for approved transdesert carriers is to-day 42 per cent. cheaper in Palestine than it is in Syria. At present this is not a determining cost factor, as is shown by the fact that Haim Nathaniel in 1931, 1932 and 1933 carried across the desert to and from Bagdad three-quarters of all the merchandise transported via Damascus, notwithstanding the fact that he enjoyed no customs franchise whatever in Syria either for his matériel or fuel. Possibly, however, the lower cost of petrol to him in Palestine may more than compensate him for the greater length of the journey by way of Transjordan. Future transport statistics may show this and, as a consequence, lead the Syrian Government again to bring down the fuel cost in Syria for transdesert carriers to the Palestine level by a further remission of taxation.

3. The eventual commercial success of the Palestine route to the Mediterranean, inaugurated as a public service by the Iraqi, Haim Nathaniel, will not depend, as I see it, upon tax bounties in Palestine and Transjordan. It will depend rather upon the shipping and railway services at Haifa, the advantages Palestine offers as a trading centre, the technical skill of transdesert carriers, and on the security and the surface of the Transjordan roads. Even the addition of a passport tax of 5s. in Transjordan still leaves the all-in basic charge of the Nathaniel service £2 lower than that of the Nairn Company, who have always been able to charge higher fares than their competitors because of the better conditions under which their passengers travel and of the fact that they employ Englishmen as convoy leaders.

4. The fare charged by the Nairn Company from Bagdad to Beirut is:—

First-class	...	...	...	£	s.	d. (sterling)
Second-class	...	...	...	7	10	0
	...	...	...	5	10	0

including food on the desert.

Dwyer and Co. (Iraq) (Limited), running an occasional Albion bus, charge 4 dinars for the same journey.

5. I have little doubt that if the passenger service between Haifa and Bagdad by Mafrag turns out to be economically feasible the British Nairn Company will be willing to put on direct cars by that route.

6. I am sending copies of this despatch to Amman, Bagdad, Beirut, Jerusalem and to the Department of Overseas Trade.

I have, &amp;c.

GILBERT MACKERETH.

[E 6484/6484/93]

No. 100.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received October 22.)*

(No. 580.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, October 6, 1934.*

I HAVE the honour to report that a rumour is current at Bagdad, and has been produced in the local press, including the British-owned *Iraq Times*, to the effect that the Iraqi Government are intending to establish a consulate for the Persian Gulf with headquarters at Bahrein.

2. I mentioned this rumour recently to the Director-General of the Iraqi Ministry for Foreign Affairs and drew his attention to the special treaty relations in which the rulers of the Arab States in the Persian Gulf stand towards His Majesty's Government. I pointed out that one of the provisions in the treaties in question was an undertaking on the part of the local ruler that he would not consent to any other foreign Government establishing diplomatic or consular representation within his territory without the previous consent of His Majesty's Government.

3. The Director-General assured me that there was no foundation in the rumour and that the Iraqi Government had no intention of appointing a consul for the Persian Gulf.

4. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf at Bushire.

I have, &amp;c.

G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

[E 6495/6495/93]

No. 101.

*Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received October 22.)*

(No. 593.)

Sir,

*Bagdad, October 10, 1934.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 464 of the 20th July, 1933, regarding anti-Zionist agitation in Iraq, I have the honour to report that the Iraqi authorities profess concern at the increase of Zionist propaganda in Bagdad and other towns in Iraq. They allege that the number of Jewish immigrants from Iraq into Palestine has recently augmented considerably, and that funds have been collected in the synagogues and despatched to a society in Palestine which is acquiring land for further Jewish settlement.

2. Action by the Iraqi Government to counter these alleged Zionist activities appears hitherto to have been confined to the confiscation of Jewish newspapers and periodicals entering Iraq. This was first brought to my notice by a telegram from the Acting High Commissioner for Palestine, who reported that rumours to this effect were current in Jerusalem. On making enquiry, I learned confidentially from a British officer in the Iraqi police that an order was issued by the Ministry of the Interior on the 13th September for all printed matter from Palestine to be examined and for all newspapers and periodicals containing "Zionist propaganda" to be seized. I understand that this has led, in practice, to the proscription and confiscation of all printed matter emanating from Jewish sources in Palestine.

3. In the absence of a request from the Government of Palestine, I have not hitherto made any official enquiry of the Iraqi Government about this interference with printed matter from Palestine.

4. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's High Commissioner for Palestine.

I have, &amp;c.

G. OGILVIE-FORBES.



[E 6599/3272/89]

No. 102.

*Acting Consul Todd to Sir John Simon.—(Received October 29.)*

(No. 35. Confidential.)

Sir,

*Aleppo, September 19, 1934.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 30, Secret, of the 1st August last, regarding the possible cession of Alexandretta to Turkey, I have the honour to state that I do not consider that a special tour in the Alexandretta area is necessary at the present time, as there have been no developments in regard to this question which is still in a dormant state.

I had, however, already made enquiries into this matter whilst in Alexandretta recently, and my enquiries tend to show that there is no connexion between the delay in the construction of harbour works at Mersin and the cession of the sanjak to Turkey, as the question of cession is not considered to be one of practical politics at the present time. The key to the riddle may possibly be found in the agreement reported to have been concluded between Turkey and Persia on economic matters during the recent visit of the Shah of Persia to Angora. It is said that under this agreement Trebizond is to be developed as the outlet for Persian transit trade through Turkey. If this is actually the case the dropping of the Mersin project becomes intelligible, although, of course, this may only be one of several reasons.

The question is, of course, brought to the front from time to time by rumours of cession spread by pro-Turkish elements in the sanjak, which desire to popularise the idea. Material for this kind of propaganda was provided recently by the decision of the French authorities to transfer certain departments of the delegation from Alexandretta to Antioch, but this measure is said to be simply one of decentralisation.

In connexion with these rumours the Turkish consul-general in Beirut had a communiqué published in the *Orient* of the 9th instant, denying any intention on the part of the Turkish Government to annex neighbouring territory. I enclose herewith the text of this communiqué, and would point out that I have noticed no reports on the subject recently in the press.

The opinion is, nevertheless, held by many in the sanjak that the French have made up their minds eventually to hand back the territory to Turkey, and that they are simply marking time until the moment is ripe for such action. If this is not so then it is difficult to account for the French neglect of the territory, the non-development of the port at Alexandretta, and the absence of French capital in productive works. The choice of Tripoli for strategic reasons instead of Alexandretta, which has a natural harbour, as the terminus of the pipe-line from Iraq also points to eventual cession. What the French expect to get from Turkey is not clear. They might be prepared to cede the territory in return for important economic concessions in Turkey itself, but this is unlikely at present or in the near future in view of the extreme nationalist spirit now prevailing in modern Turkey.

I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's consul-general at Beirut, His Majesty's consul at Damascus, and to the British vice-consul at Alexandretta.

I have, &amp;c.

FRANK H. TODD.

[E 6813/927/89]

No. 103.

*Consul-General Havard to Sir John Simon.—(Received November 9.)*

(No. 61 E.)

Sir,

*Beirut, November 1, 1934.**Industry.*

I HAVE the honour to report that a study of the economic conditions in the Lebanon up to the 25th October reveals the fact that local industries have been well occupied. These industries are naturally not on a large scale and their output is destined mainly for local consumption, only a small quantity being

exported to neighbouring countries. Factories making biscuits and farinaceous foods have been working full time, and business in the jam, chocolate and confectionery factories, usually dull in the summer months, has been unusually brisk. The Chekka Cement Factory has been working night and day in order to satisfy the demands made of it. The output of hosiery has been larger than in the corresponding period of last year, and the Beirut brewery of Gellad frères has done, and is doing, a flourishing trade. The only industries which have shown a falling off in production are the local textile and leather industries; although they are protected, they still seem unable to compete with goods imported from Japan and Czechoslovakia respectively.

*Commerce.*

2. As regards commerce, the summer is always a dead season, but since mid-September there has been a revival of activity caused by merchants replenishing their stocks for the winter. There was a large drop in the value of imports during the first quarter of 1934, but it was partly made good during the second quarter of the year. On the other hand, exports for the first six months of 1934 showed a slight increase over those for the corresponding period of 1933. Buyers from the U.S.S.R. have been visiting the country making purchases, and it is hoped that more regular trade with the U.S.S.R. will result now that that country enjoys the same commercial facilities as other members of the League of Nations. Much benefit is also expected from the new commercial agreement with Egypt, which was signed in Cairo on the 11th October and which came into force on the 21st October.

*Economics.*

3. The economic situation of the Lebanon would appear to have brighter prospects than for some years past. The harvest, which is the most important item in the country's economy, has been particularly bountiful and the crops have fetched good prices both locally and in Palestine, whither a certain amount of wheat has been exported. This has conferred a twofold benefit on the Lebanon, since it has increased the purchasing power of the peasants, with its repercussion on the local market, and it has led to a diminished import of cereals from abroad. The summer season has attracted a larger number of Palestinians, Iraqis and Egyptians to the Lebanon villages. It is estimated that there were about 7,500 long-period visitors this year as against 6,000 last year. Not only, however, were the numbers larger, but the visitors were of better quality with more money to spend. In addition to these visitors there were many hundreds of short-period visitors.

*Finance and Productive Works.*

4. At the beginning of 1934 the financial situation of the Lebanon was not bright. There was a considerable amount due from arrears of taxes, but the money which has entered the country since the beginning of the year has enabled debtors to pay off a large part of their arrears. The budgets of the French High Commission and of the various component States under French mandate have been curtailed and an effective equilibrium between revenue and expenditure has been established, whilst still preserving intact the sources of revenue necessary for the programme of productive works instituted by the French High Commissioner. This programme, which comprises the extension of the Aleppo-Nissibin Railway to the Iraq frontier, the heightening of the barrage at Homs, the amelioration of the desert track from Damascus towards Bagdad, the provision of water for parts of the Jebel Druse and the extension of the port of Beirut, is being carried out actively. During the next four years more than 40 million francs is to be spent on Beirut port, and tenders for the supply of metallic caissons in this connexion to the value of 4 million francs were called for during October and are now under consideration.

5. Copies of this despatch have been sent to His Majesty's consuls at Damascus and Aleppo.

I have, &amp;c.

G. T. HAVARD.



[E 7467/1247/89]

No. 104.

*Consul Parr to Sir John Simon.—(Received December 14.)*

(No. 43.)

Sir,

*Aleppo, December 7, 1934.*

WITH reference to Mr. Cowan's despatch No. 2 of the 27th February last, I have the honour to report that, according to a notice in the local press, a section of 40 kilom. of railway beyond Tell Ziwan will be formally opened by the High Commissioner on the 5th January. The railway authorities, however, state that no actual date is yet decided on.

2. It is reported that station buildings have already been erected at Kubur-el-Bid, at Demir-Kapu and at Tell Kotchek. It is hoped that the line as far as Tell Kotchek will be completed within a few weeks.

3. I am sending copies of this despatch direct to His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad, His Majesty's consul-general at Beirut and His Majesty's consul at Damascus.

I have, &amp;c.

ROBERT PARR.

END

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